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American Made: Ansel Adams and the Bishop National Bank's "The Islands of Hawaii"

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American Made:
Ansel Adams and the Bishop National Bank's
The Islands of Hawaii

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B.A., Truman State University, 2008

A Thesis

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American Made:
Ansel Adams and the Bishop National Bank's
The Islands of Hawaii

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University of Connecticut

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Introduction

In February of 1958, Ansel Adams stood on the outside lawn of Iolani Palace in Honolulu. He peered upwards through the viewfinder of his Hasselblad F1000 camera to locate the Hawaiian and American flags installed atop the palace roof. They fluttered against a daytime sky of wispy clouds as Adams released the shutter. The opulent Italianate architecture of the building, a remnant of Western influence in the once active Polynesian kingdom, occupies the lower left corner of the resulting photograph, partly obscured from view by a pair of snaking branches that juts in from the right-hand frame [fig. 1].¹ Just as Adams had done, the viewer looks in through these branches, which create an impromptu elliptical frame with curves at top and bottom, to locate the stars and stripes of the American standard placed resolutely in the center. The photographer's framing gives prominence to the American flag over the Hawaiian flag, an importance echoed by the angle of the shot, which makes the American flag appear to fly slightly higher than its neighbor does. Through these compositional choices, Adams offers a visual pledge of allegiance. The Hawaiian flag and all other elements of the photograph—the palace, the tree, Adams, and the unseen lawn on which he stands—come to be located not only spatially below the U.S. flag, but also symbolically within its greater meaning. In this manner, the image sends a clear message of Hawai'i's national affiliation.

1. Construction of Iolani Palace completed in 1882 under the reign of King David Kalakaua. King Kalakaua's sister, Queen Lili'uokalani, ascended the throne after his death in 1891, but she was soon overthrown and subsequently held prisoner in the palace. The chapter to follow addresses this history in further detail.

Such conscious treatment is significant considering the historical moment during which Adams took the photograph and the circumstances through which the image reached a broader audience. The image appears in the opening pages to *The Islands of Hawaii*, a photobook published by the Honolulu-based Bishop National Bank of Hawaii in the summer of 1958 to commemorate the company's 100th year of business. At the time, Hawai'i was only a territory of the United States, and the future of the islands' relationship with the U.S. was one marked by uncertainty, having been a topic of political debate and public interest on the mainland for more than a decade. The possibility of full statehood for Hawai'i dominated the conversation; however, the issue of the islands' culturally diverse and largely nonwhite population served as a central point of contention and as a consistent delay of action. During the post-World War II ascendancy of the United States to international leadership, the history of U.S. colonial activities in the islands and the contemporary hesitation surrounding Hawaiian statehood stood at odds with the nation's prevailing rhetoric of freedom and democracy. As Adams's image demonstrates and as this study argues, *The Islands of Hawaii* was far more than a mere promotional piece to celebrate the achievements of the bank: the book responded to statehood debates and defended Hawai'i's claim for a star on the U.S. flag. Moreover, the manner in which Adams and the bank negotiated the issue of statehood within the larger social and political contexts of the period was multi-dimensional, appealing both to the rhetoric of inclusiveness and to a prevailing undercurrent of conformity occupying U.S. interests at the time.

The focus of this thesis thus tracks the development and significance of *The Islands of Hawaii* within the context of the public and political discourse on statehood

that took place roughly between 1947, when the first postwar statehood bill appeared before Congress, and the photobook's 1958 publication.² Though only one component of a larger effort to assert Hawai'i's national belonging, the book opens a window onto the various arguments and counterarguments made in favor of Hawaiian statehood during this time. Translating the rhetoric of the statehood debates through the medium of photography, *The Islands of Hawaii* contributes to a visual production of the islands for a Western audience. Such visualization started with sketches by nineteenth-century explorers and continued into the twentieth century with the tourist industry's image of a tropical paradise, one that endures even today.³ In the discourses of colonialism and tourism, Hawai'i is traditionally represented as 'other' to the West. In *The Islands of Hawaii*, Adams works both with and against the established imagery of Hawai'i. While the colonist of yesteryear and the modern traveler alike found cause to believe in the difference of the islands, Adams and the Bishop National Bank intended to establish a narrative of Hawai'i's coequality and equality with the mainland. As a photographer intimately tied to the American natural scene and national ethos, Adams was in a unique position to lead such efforts. Visual tropes of beaches, tropical foliage, volcanoes, and native inhabitants occupying the traditional imagery of Hawai'i combine in Adams's images with the photographer's aesthetics and the popular subject matter commonly employed to signify the American nation.

2. Roger Bell, *Last Among Equals: Hawaiian Statehood and American Politics* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1984), 125.

3. For more on early European and American interpretations of Hawai'i see, David W. Forbes, *Encounters with Paradise: Views of Hawaii and Its People, 1778-1941* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press; Honolulu: Honolulu Academy of Arts, 1992). For more on the visualization of Hawai'i through advertising see, DeSoto Brown, "Beautiful, Romantic Hawaii: How the Fantasy Image Came to Be" *The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts* 20 (1994): 252-271, and Jane Desmond, *Staging Tourism: Bodies on Display from Waikiki to Sea World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

For the purposes of this thesis, “nation” is understood following Benedict Anderson’s conception of an “imagined community”; that is, a community of individuals united by shared experiences and identifications.⁴ Anderson offers this definition in his influential study on nationalism from 1983, and attributes the rise of the nation to print capitalism.⁵ According to Anderson, the mass dissemination of newspapers and books provided the means to connect people across time and place who may never meet in person, thus fostering and sustaining imagined ties. Scholars of nationalism have since expanded on and refined Anderson’s theory of nationhood to more fully examine the power relations existing within national constructions. As feminist scholar Anne McClintock reminds readers in her essay “Family Feuds: Gender, Nationalism and the Family,” “Despite nationalisms’ ideological investment in the idea of popular *unity*, nations have historically amounted to the sanctioned institutionalization of gender *difference*.”⁶ McClintock identifies the family as a site of such difference and notes how “the family trope” is important to nations for two reasons: first as site of gender hierarchy that offers an origin story for the nation, and second as an institution void of history that paradoxically lends the nation an appearance of timelessness.⁷ Echoing McClintock and similarly expanding on Anderson’s understanding of the nation with consideration to feminist theory, visual culture, and American Studies, Laura Wexler aptly notes, “The newspaper that instantiates the nation is an illustrated text, and one whose messages

4. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed (1983; repr., London: Verso, 1991), 6.

5. See Anderson’s chapter “The Origins of National Consciousness.”

6. Anne McClintock, “Family Feuds: Gender, Nationalism and the Family” *Feminist Review* 44, Nationalisms and National Identities (Summer 1993): 61. Emphasis in the original.

7. *Ibid.*, 66-7.

concerning class and race are as potent as its circulation is wide and its readership gendered.”⁸

Anderson’s notion of the nation as a constructed imagining, and McClintock and Wexler’s attention to issues of gender, race, and class within such imaginings, informs the proceeding discussion of Adams’s images featured in *The Islands of Hawaii*. The medium of photography is seen to play a central role in the establishment and affirmation of nationhood throughout this study, one comparable to that of the written texts considered significant by Anderson. In *The Islands of Hawaii*, Adams and the bank draw on and adapt national myths to build both a visual and textual narrative that commands mainland readers’ acknowledgement of the islands’ participation in U.S. social and economic activities. As the discussion to follow elucidates, Adams took the lead on the centennial project to construct Hawai‘i’s Americanness through the book’s structure, tone, and carefully composed subjects.

An argument for the pro-statehood agenda behind *The Islands of Hawaii* takes shape through two sections. Section one opens by tracking the beginning of the statehood campaign and introducing the protagonists behind the centennial project—The Bishop National Bank and Ansel Adams. The bank’s commission of the photographer is particularly significant in the context of the statehood debates, and archived correspondence between Adams and various parties in Hawai‘i reveals an awareness of the project’s stakes and possibilities for the islands. The section ends with a analysis of the images found in the introductory pages of *The Islands of Hawaii* to highlight how Adams positions the Hawaiian landscape as always-already American and lays a

8. Laura Wexler, “Techniques of the Imaginary Nation: Engendering Family Photography” in *Race and the Production of Modern American Nationalism*, ed. Reynolds J. Scott-Childress (New York: Garland Publishers, Inc., 1999), 365.

foundation for picturing the American character of the islands' community throughout the remainder of the photobook. Section two of this thesis considers Adams's portraits and images of industry featured in *The Islands of Hawaii*. Such images bring to light dynamics of gender, race, and class as they defined the U.S. nation in the mid-twentieth century, and variously supported and conflicted with American nationhood for Hawai'i. In conversation with McClintock and Wexler, section two demonstrates how Adams uses images of families and the extension of familial roles and hierarchies throughout other institutions in *The Islands of Hawaii* to interpolate the islands' residents more fully within the American polity despite racial and ethnic differences with the mainland. In both sections, a discussion of statehood for Hawai'i and an analysis of images in *The Islands of Hawaii* unfolds against the backdrop of the Cold War, decolonization, and changes in mainland race relations.

Upon initial consideration, *The Islands of Hawaii* appears an unusual project for Ansel Adams. In contrast to the photographer's independently produced and well-known black-and-white landscapes, the photobook is corporate sponsored and predominately focused on people. Yet, it offers an important perspective onto a different side of the artist. By considering the role Adams played in the project and by placing *The Islands of Hawaii* in relation to the photographer's lesser-known photo-documentary work from around the same period, the scope of knowledge surrounding the photographer begins to broaden, thereby expanding the dialog surrounding Adams and his work. The value of *The Islands of Hawaii* and the images therein lies in the potential the project holds for achieving a more nuanced understanding of Ansel Adams and of the cultural mythology invested in his work. The current thesis makes strides towards this end.

Section I.

Hawai'i Calls: The Statehood Campaign and the Beginning of the Centennial Book

In the spring of 1957, Holst and Cummings and Myers, the advertising agency representing the Bishop National Bank of Hawaii, sent a letter to renowned photographer Ansel Adams at his home and studio in San Francisco, California. In the message, the agency's Vice President, Carl R. Pope, Jr., announced the bank's approaching centennial, and inquired as to Adams's interest in and availability for work on a photobook covering the islands in connection with this important occasion.⁹ Pope's letter mentioned his client's familiarity with Adams's previous work in the U.S. territory during the late 1940s, and with a recent commission the photographer had completed for the American Trust Company, a bank in Northern California. Noting that the Bishop National Bank was seriously considering a project of similar style and stature to these earlier works, Pope indicated that the centennial book "would be open to suggestion" from the photographer.¹⁰ Responding that he was "deep in a project" to complete printing for an exhibition of his landscapes picked up by the United States Information Agency (USIA), Adams nonetheless accepted the commission and he promised to write again soon with some ideas and estimates for the book.¹¹

9. Carl H. Pope to Ansel Adams, April 16, 1957. Center for Creative Photography, the University of Arizona, Tucson: Ansel Adams Archive. Copyright © The Ansel Adams Publishing Rights Trust. Holst and Cummings and Myers, Ltd. had offices located in Honolulu and San Francisco. Some discussion on the project occurred in person when Pope subsequently made a trip to the mainland in May of 1957. As part of the centennial celebrations, the bank also donated \$50,000 to the Bishop Museum toward the construction of a planetarium and hosted community events during the summer of 1958.

10. Ibid.

11. Ansel Adams to Carl H. Pope, April 19, 1957. Center for Creative Photography, the University of Arizona, Tucson: Ansel Adams Archive. Copyright © The Ansel Adams Publishing Rights Trust.

The details that arise from this initial exchange between Adams and a representative for the Bishop National Bank begin to frame a picture of the bank, the photographer, and the moment in American history that would foster a fresh perspective on the Hawaiian islands and what it meant to be American. The discussion to follow takes a closer look at these two institutions—the bank and Ansel Adams—in the mid-twentieth century and the historical circumstances that gave rise to the photobook that would come to be *The Islands of Hawaii*.

The Bishop National Bank and Hawaiian Statehood

Undoubtedly, the Bishop National Bank had much to celebrate on the occasion of its centennial. Established in 1858 by American entrepreneurs at the height of Hawai‘i’s whaling industry, the bank subsequently weathered various political and socioeconomic interests that held power in the islands in the late nineteenth century. Notably, this period witnessed the overthrow of the sovereign Hawaiian monarch led by the plantation-owning sons of American missionaries in 1893. Following a short period of rule under the provisional government they established, Hawai‘i was ultimately annexed and declared a territory of the United States in 1898 and 1900, respectively.¹² Despite these tumultuous—and legally questionable—transitions, the bank readily adapted and continued to thrive even as new industries and new challenges would rise into the

12. For more on this period of Hawaiian history and the islands’ relationship with the United States see, Ralph S. Kuykendall and A. Grove Day, *Hawaii: A History, from Polynesian Kingdom to American State* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1961); Gavan Daws, *Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian Islands* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1968); Roger Bell, *Last Among Equals: Hawaiian Statehood and American Politics* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1984).

twentieth century.¹³ By the time the Bishop National Bank began planning for a centennial photobook in the late 1950s, Hawai'i was facing the possibility of yet another significant change to its national standing. For more than a decade, the territory had been deep in a project of its own to achieve full statehood for the islands, asking for greater representation and equal rights with the mainland.¹⁴

The issue of statehood for Hawai'i was not new, although depending on the perspective, Hawaiian statehood had been either “a rumor, a worry, or a promise” since the islands’ U.S. annexation.¹⁵ The foundation for admission into the Union had been in place since 1900 when the U.S. government classified Hawai'i as an incorporated territory, bringing it under a form of governance in line with the continental territories. This measure was achieved due largely to the appeals of the islands’ powerful American businessmen who sought to secure their investments in local sugar plantations and access to the U.S. market.¹⁶ Yet, long after admission of the last mainland territories, Hawai'i remained a colonial possession subject to the authority of Congress and without an

13 .When established in 1858 by Charles R. Bishop and William A. Aldrich, the bank took the name of Bishop & Co. Though it changed ownership and frequently merged with local banks over the years, the namesake to Charles Bishop remained until 1960 when it became First National Bank of Hawaii. Today the bank goes by the name of First Hawaiian Bank. A timeline of events significant to the bank’s history is available on their website. “Timeline of FHB,” FHB.com, accessed December 11, 2011. <https://www.fhb.com/about-timeline.htm>.

Charles Bishop was a prominent figure in Hawaiian society whose allegiances were divided by the overthrow. Through his marriage to Princess Bernice Pauahi Pākī, Bishop maintained close ties with the Hawaiian Royal Family. Yet he was also the banker for C. Brewer and Company, a firm active with the powerful sugar industry that stood to benefit from the coup, for more see Harold Winfield Kent, *Charles Reed Bishop: Man of Hawaii* (Palo Alto, C.A.: Pacific Books, 1965), and John S. Whitehead, "Western Progressives, Old South Planters, or Colonial Oppressors: The Enigma of Hawai'i's 'Big Five,' 1898-1940," *The Western Historical Quarterly* 30, no. 3 (Autumn 1999): 299.

14. Bell, 44, 52-5.

15. Gretchen Heefner, ““A Symbol of the New Frontier’: Hawaiian Statehood, Anti-Colonialism, and Winning the Cold War,” *Pacific Historical Review* 74, no. 4 (November 2005): 556.

16. Laura L. Basson, “Annexed Americans: Robert Wilcox, Home Rule, and Self-Government for Hawaii,” in *White Enough to Be American* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 95.

official political voice. Initially, this arrangement suited the Hawaiian oligarchy who nonetheless maintained power concerning islands activities and who kept close friendships with members of Congress.¹⁷ With their commercial interests protected and their authority exercised, Hawai‘i’s elite was content with territorial status. Moreover, they shared the sentiments of mainland politicians and polity that the largely nonwhite population of the islands should remain disenfranchised.¹⁸

The character of Hawai‘i’s population at the start of the twentieth century reflected the impact of the archipelago’s earlier colonization by the West. As with the experience of Native Americans on the mainland, the introduction of foreign disease and imperial violence following western contact in 1776 greatly reduced Hawai‘i’s native population. Whaling and the civilizing crusades of the nineteenth century brought American ships and New England missionaries to the islands.¹⁹ The rise of the sugar plantations led primarily by missionary descendents—the same men who later ousted the Hawaiian monarch, Queen Lili‘uokalani—necessitated cheap labor. This need was principally satisfied through the importation of Asian workers, who soon accounted for a majority of the islands’ population. Once territorial rule was in place, the various immigration measures adopted by the U.S. in the twentieth century put parameters on this work force and prevented the naturalization of immigrants, severely limiting their ability

17. Bell, 55.

18. Basson, 103-112. Basson discusses the strategies taken to preserve white domination in Hawai‘i after annexation.

19. For more on nineteenth-century history of missionary involvement in the islands with an emphasis on the reciprocal relationship between Hawai‘i and the United States, see Gary Y. Okihiro, “Pagan Priest,” in *Island World: A History of Hawai‘i and the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 72-97.

to influence islands politics.²⁰ This situation was tenuous, however, for even as territorial rule gave the U.S. government the ability to place restrictions on the immigrant population it also gave individuals born in Hawai'i the right to American citizenship under the U.S. constitution.²¹

By mid-century, little had changed in the ethnic composition of the islands or the prejudices of Hawai'i's American businessmen and their mainland compatriots, but the dynamics of power at home had begun to shift.²² Residents of Asian heritage had long held the majority in Hawai'i, but it was only in the 1940s, with the coming into political consciousness of new generations of locally born Asian residents, that their participation in island politics could make an impact.²³ Increased racial and economic discrimination by Congress against the islands throughout the 1930s and 40s led the growing, politically active Asian majority and the powerful Caucasian minority to unite across race, class, and interests towards the common cause of petitioning for statehood status.²⁴ Their work

20. Whitehead, 321. For more on how U.S. activities shaped Hawai'i's population, see John P. Rosa, "Race/Ethnicity," in *The Value of Hawai'i: Knowing the Past, Shaping the Future*, ed. by Craig Howes and Jonathan Kay Kamakawiwo'ole Osorio (Honolulu: Published for the Biographical Research Center by the University of Hawai'i Press, 2010), 55-7.

21. Bell, 55. For a general history of Hawai'i through the lens of economics, see Thomas Kemper Hitch, *Islands in Transition: The Past, Present, and Future of Hawaii's Economy* (Honolulu: First Hawaiian Bank, 1992), 182-84.

22. According to census data from the time, Hawai'i consisted of a majority of Japanese residents, comprising around 40% of the population. Native Hawaiian's and Part-Hawaiian's represented 24%; Chinese residents made up for 16%, and less than 5.4% were classified as "non-Portuguese" Caucasian, with another 11.9% of the population classified as Portuguese Caucasian. Andrew William Lind, "Table: Population by Race, 1953-1960," *Hawaii's People* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1967), 28.

23. Bell, 40.

24. See Bell's section, "Seeds of the Statehood Drive," 55-66. The alliance for statehood between classes in Hawai'i would not always remain strong as the statehood campaign continued after WWII. Statehood was largely the effort of middle-class Asian Americans. Hawai'i's wealthy white businessmen were ambivalent to the idea of statehood as it threatened their own power in the islands. Individuals of indigenous heritage typically expressed their displeasure at the idea of officially severing prospects of an independent Hawaiian nation, yet such concerns received little attention.

was interrupted, however, when Japanese fighters attacked U.S. naval ships at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, demanding U.S. action in World War II. Over the next few years, military activity in the islands expanded under martial law and all focus went towards fighting the Axis powers. When the war ended in 1945, the U.S. stepped into a new role as world leader and Hawai'i's residents were even more determined to regain control of their community and achieve equality through statehood.²⁵ The recent war and the political and social atmospheres developing in its wake would present both possibilities and challenges for Hawai'i.

In terms of possibilities, the events of WWII and the resulting humanitarian spirit provided renewed momentum to the drive for statehood in the late 1940s.²⁶ Led initially by local residents and later managed and funded by the Territorial Legislature, the Hawaiian Statehood Commission set up initiatives to lobby for equal representation in Washington D.C. in 1947.²⁷ As it happened, the Commission hired the advertising agency of Holst and Cummings—the same agency that would later represent the Bishop National Bank—to manage pro-statehood publicity in D.C. as the first postwar bill for statehood was set to appear before Congress. Along with the distribution of campaign material in

25. Ibid., 84-6. While the story of modern Hawai'i is often recounted as the triumph of Asian wage laborers and their descendants in the fight for fairer conditions, contemporary scholars are keen to paint a more nuanced picture of the gains achieved in this period, especially in light of persisting structural inequalities and the tourist-dependent economy of Hawai'i today. For more, see Jonathan Kay Kamakawiwo'ole Osorio, "Hawaiian Issues," *The Value of Hawai'i: Knowing the Past, Shaping the Future*, ed. by Craig Howes and Jonathan Kay Kamakawiwo'ole Osorio (Honolulu: Published for the Biographical Research Center by the University of Hawai'i Press, 2010), 15-21. For the purposes of this thesis, the focus is on the period and circumstances surrounding the campaign for statehood.

26. For more on the link between WWII and statehood see, Tom Coffman, "Reinventing Hawai'i," in *The Value of Hawai'i: Knowing the Past, Shaping the Future*, ed. by Craig Howes and Jonathan Kay Kamakawiwo'ole Osorio (Honolulu: Published for the Biographical Research Center by the University of Hawai'i Press, 2010), 10.

27. Bell, 126. In May 1947, members in the Hawaiian legislature established a bipartisan eight-member Statehood Commission to replace a loosely organized and poorly funded Citizen's Statehood Committee.

Washington, such media outlets as *Look* and *Life* magazine ran photo essays reflecting favorably on island society.²⁸ Leveraging human rights sentiments evoked during the war and fueled by the international call for decolonization from the newly established United Nations, the time seemed ripe for political action on behalf of statehood.²⁹ Congress, however, disagreed. In contrast to the possibilities opened by WWII, the increasingly conservative and suspicious atmosphere of the Cold War era stalled action. Although the House of Representatives passed the bill in 1947, the Senate rejected the proposal for Hawai'i's admission the following year citing concern for the islands' inchoate state and fear of communist influence in the community, concerns rooted in racial prejudice.³⁰ Undeterred, advocates immediately regrouped and again began what would become a long and circuitous campaign for statehood. Throughout the years to come, the issue of the islands' ethnic diversity remained a divisive factor. With the U.S. increasingly in the world spotlight and Cold War tensions escalating, "race" would factor into arguments from both statehood opponents and supporters.

28. For a discussion of pro-Hawai'i articles in these publication and others, see Heefner, 571-74.

29. Of the other U.S. colonies gained in the 1890s along with Hawai'i, only the Philippines received independence, a process put in motion before the establishment of the U.N. through the Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934, which ended in 1946 when the Philippines became a republic. In 1947, Puerto Rico gained Commonwealth status and the ability to elect its own governor; it continues to define its political status today. The Guam Organic Act of 1950 officially established the islands as an unincorporated territory of the U.S. Residents were granted U.S. citizenship; however, because Guam is not a state residents cannot participate in elections and do not have a voting representative in Congress.

30. Bell highlights the racial issues underlying the Congressional delay of statehood, noting how Republican Senator Hugh Butler led the anti-Communist crusade against Hawai'i. Summarizing the Senator, Bell states, "Butler predicted that before long residents of Asian ancestry would achieve total ascendancy in all aspects of island life. Had Hawaii 'been settled and primarily populated by Americans from the mainland,' he concluded, 'there might be no great problem about admitting it as a state.'" 176. For information on both island and mainland perspectives on statehood, and a detailed account of the role accusations of communism played in the early statehood debates, see John S. Whitehead, "The Cold War Stymies Hawai'i as the Forty-ninth State, 1946-1950," in *Completing the Union: Alaska, Hawai'i, and the Battle for Statehood* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press: 2004), 137-66.

Still caught in the debate a decade later in 1957, the Bishop National Bank responded to the circumstances surrounding their centennial preparations. Certainly, the bank recognized the potential benefits of statehood—political, social, and commercial.³¹ The idea of a photobook offered the ability not only to promote the bank, but the islands more generally within the context of the statehood debates. Edward Joesting, the bank's Head of Public Relations and the driving force behind the centennial project, alludes to this idea, writing to Adams in August of that year:

Of all the possibilities which offer themselves to us, I have definite feelings at this point about only three. First, that our book be a well-rounded and true picture of Hawaii in 1958. Second, that we avoid the clichés and the false impressions in which the Visitors Bureau and Chamber of Commerce specialize. Third, I feel we must avoid a historic book. There will certainly be occasional historic interest in our photography and writing, and it would be a great pleasure to do something of this sort, but I feel that we should rather have a book which is looking toward the future.³²

As Joesting envisions the photobook, he expresses a distinct desire to re-imagine Hawai'i in a new, and ostensibly more authentic, light. He reiterates a suggestion made by Adams in an earlier letter to leave behind the tourist industry's image of an islands paradise, and he further recommends they forget for a moment the history of Hawai'i, one marked by U.S. colonial activities and the recent events of World War II. Instead, Joesting states

31. The economic benefits of statehood for the Bishop National Bank of Hawaii are evidenced in the bank's subsequent publications reflecting financial growth. See for example, Harold H. Yost and Edward Joesting, *The New State of Hawaii; Facts, Figures, Charts and Pictures Prepared* (Bishop National Bank of Hawaii, Honolulu:1960). Statehood brought high exposure to the islands and coupled with the technological arrival of jet airplanes tourism soon became a major commercial market. For more see Hitch, 182-84.

32. Edward Joesting to Ansel Adams, August 14, 1957. Center for Creative Photography, the University of Arizona, Tucson: Ansel Adams Archive. Copyright © The Ansel Adams Publishing Rights Trust.

first and foremost the need to capture a “well-rounded and true picture,” with an “eye looking toward the future.” That future held the potential for statehood and the bank’s interest lie in doing its part to draw Hawai’i firmly into the American national consciousness. Adams was a key component in achieving this objective. By commissioning a well-known American artist to complete their commemorative project, the bank was on its way to building an American narrative for *The Islands of Hawaii*. Adams’s particular reputation in the post-war years, as well as his previous experience with such projects and his formulaic approach to the photobook format, ensured that *The Islands of Hawaii* would reach a broad audience of mainland residents and politicians with an effective message for an American Hawai’i.³³

Ansel Adams, the West, and the Cold War

“Ansel Adams may be unaware that when word of this [the bank’s commission] first became known here,” wrote Honolulu-based photographer Werner Stoy in 1966, “it created a minor local revolt.” Stoy was writing to William J. Lederer, co-editor of the *Honolulu Beacon*, in response to an interview from the same year that Lederer had conducted with Adams in which the photographer reflected despairingly on the local talent of Hawai’i.³⁴ Adams’s comment on the lack of a “creative attitude” in the islands

33. The book was not produced for retail, but was given as gifts to bank members, sent to mainland libraries and cultural institutions, and provided to U.S. politicians. These recipients were specifically suggested by Adams, see Ansel Adams to Edward Joesting, August 2, 1958. Center for Creative Photography, the University of Arizona, Tucson: Ansel Adams Archive. Copyright © The Ansel Adams Publishing Rights Trust.

34. Perhaps some of the wounding comments occurred when Lederer asks Adams about creative photographers in Hawai’i. Adams responded stating, “When I came there first, I was amazed, disturbed, at the lack of what you might call the creative attitude. ...There are some painters in Hawaii and they do well; you have one of the greatest artist in the world in Hawaii—Jean

likely exacerbated old wounds inflicted a decade prior when he was invited to take the lead on the Bishop National Bank's commemorative project. In his letter, Stoy further recalls how Honolulu photographers and artists, upon hearing of Adams's hire, voiced their displeasure. Feeling unfairly overlooked by the bank, an ad hoc committee of artists planned to take their grievance to the press in hopes of altering the commission. Stoy concludes by noting, "Better judgment prevailed, and the matter was finally dropped. It is well that this never reached the public."³⁵ Even in his frustration with the disregard of himself and his colleagues, Stoy concedes to the quality of the book produced by Adams. Nevertheless, there is a clear feeling among the local artists that the bank hired Adams solely for his "famous name and international reputation."³⁶ Indeed, in the decades after WWII, Adams found himself in high demand, mounting exhibitions for global audiences and taking on numerous commercial projects similar to the bank's centennial book. More than just a name, however, Adams produced images that evoked the nation's core values of which freedom, self-determination, and moral responsibility received renewed force in the postwar years. This tie to the imagined national character and the multiple spheres in which the photographer worked—artistic, commercial, political, and social—made Adams a particularly compelling artist with regards to the pro-statehood agenda underlying *The Islands of Hawaii*.

Charlot. Charlot would like to have others of stature, greater or less, including photographers, come to live in Hawaii." See "Ansel Adams Reveal Hawaii Feelings," Two-Part Interview with William J. Lederer, *Honolulu Beacon* 6, no. 8 (August 1966): 34.

35. Werner Stoy to William J. Lederer, August 17, 1966. Center for Creative Photography, the University of Arizona, Tucson: Ansel Adams Archive. Copyright © The Ansel Adams Publishing Rights Trust.

36. R. Wenkam to Ansel Adams, September 6, 1966. Center for Creative Photography, the University of Arizona, Tucson: Ansel Adams Archive. Copyright © The Ansel Adams Publishing Rights Trust.

When Adams began work on the photobook, he had more than four decades of photographing to his name. Since the 1920s, the photographer had established himself within both the fine art community and with the mainstream public through his expansive, tonally rich black-and-white views of the pristine landscape. Adams often photographed the parklands near his home state of California and was closely associated with the West. *Mount Rainier, Sunrise* (1948) is illustrative of the iconic style for which Adams was renowned [fig. 1.1]. Taken while working on a Guggenheim Fellowship to document the U.S. National Parks, *Mount Rainer, Sunrise* offers onlookers the sense of standing outside the scene looking in on nature's beauty.³⁷ The low, rolling clouds moving through the valley are balanced by the elegant height of the snow covered mountain at the center, highlighted by the breaking morning sun. The tree-blanketed foothills on either side of the valley remain shadowed, providing an anchor for the viewer through their dark, weighted presence. In composition and content, *Mount Rainer, Sunrise* is typical of Adams's work. He regularly photographed the landscape in atmospheric transition, emptied of the human figure or any sign of human existence. Indeed, the view of Mount Rainer offers little evidence as to where Adams himself may have stood to take the photograph. The end result of such strategy presents viewers with only the majesty of the photographed site, awe-inspiring and timeless. The strength and stability of the natural scene in Adams's images served as symbols of the nation's own power.

Such scenes as that of Mount Rainier, which emphasized formal elements of shape, contrast, and space, supported Adams's efforts to establish photography as an

37. Adams received the Guggenheim Fellowship in 1946 and again in 1948 to continue work on his project. See Mary Street Alinder, *Ansel Adams: A Biography* (Henry Hold and Company: New York), 204-224; and select letters in *Ansel Adams: Letters and Images, 1916-1984*.

expressive medium deserving of fine art status. While much had been gained in this vein by an earlier generation of photographers including Edward Weston and Alfred Stieglitz, individuals who later became Adams's mentors, photography's position in the art world was still uncertain.³⁸ Adams spent his career working to better define photography's communicative qualities—the ability of the photograph to represent an inner experience as well as the outer world.³⁹ He dedicated himself to refining his practice, developing intricate methods for technical precision to achieve the highest aesthetic quality prior to releasing the shutter. As is fitting of an artist, Adams exhibited his work in museums and galleries, had patrons, and maintained close relationships with art world friends throughout his career.

At the same time, however, the limited market for fine art prints during this period and the photographer's financial responsibilities necessitated that he stay active in an instructional capacity and in a commercial sphere as well.⁴⁰ Adams frequently produced technical manuals and portfolios of his work for sale on the popular market. Later in Adams's career, his landscapes increasingly operated not only aesthetically as fine art, but as vehicles for social messages. This is particularly evident in the photographer's projects related to the National Parks. For Adams, the open landscape held symbolic and spiritual meaning for the nation. He viewed the existence of the National Parks as indicative of America's "advanced society," and frequently used his photographs to advocate in Washington D.C. and to the public for the continued preservation of the

38. Robert Turnage, "Ansel Adams: The Role of the Artist in the Environmental Movement," in *Celebrating the American Earth: A Portfolio* (Washington, D.C.: The Wilderness Society, c. 1981), 22.

39. For an example of Adams writing on the medium see "Some Definitions," *IMAGE: The Journal of the George Eastman House of Photography* 1 (March 1959): 6-33.

40. Adams referred to this as bread-and-butter work. Ansel Adams to Nancy Newhall, 1943 in *Ansel Adams: Letters and Images, 1916-1984*, 143.

country's wilderness.⁴¹ Around the time of the Bishop National Bank's commission, Adams was involved in a widely successful project of this kind titled *This Is the American Earth*, for which the photographer collaborated with close friend Nancy Newhall. Initially taking the form of a 1955 exhibition for the Sierra Club, and later expanded into a popular book published in 1960, *This Is the American Earth* intended to instill in viewers the importance of protecting the nation's open wilderness. Discussing the project, Adams's biographer Jonathan Spaulding notes how its success lie in taming Frederick Jackson Turner's nineteenth-century frontier thesis in support of westward expansion with the ideas of nature and humanity expressed in the contemporaneous writings of Walt Whitman. "Rather than a Turnerian conquest of nature," writes Spaulding in *Ansel Adams and the American Landscape*, "they offered Whitman's vision of America as 'nature's nation,' in which American culture gains its strength from the power and beauty of the continent."⁴² Spaulding also notes the project's nationalist tone, reengaging the centuries-old myth of the open frontier tied to notions of freedom and responsibility.⁴³

This "tone of triumphant nationalism" and Adams's general air of patriotism in the postwar years made him an attractive candidate for the purposes of the United States Information Agency (USIA). Increasingly self-conscious of the nation's image as the

41. Ansel Adams, *My Camera in the National Parks: 30 Photographs with interpretive text and informative material on the Parks and Monuments and photographic data* (Yosemite National Park, CA: Virginia Adams; Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1950), 3. See also, Turnage, 22-3, for a discussion of the influence Adams's photographs had on the establishment of Kings Canyon National Park.

42. Jonathan Spaulding, *Ansel Adams and the American Landscape: A Biography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 307-14.

43. Ibid., 314. Although Adams's did not think of his work as political, his involvement in a burgeoning environmental movement and the increasingly social subject matter he took on in the postwar years was certainly ideological and placed him within political circles. This idea receives further discussion in the next chapter.

Cold War developed, the Eisenhower administration established the USIA in 1953, dedicated to managing the circulation of information concerning the U.S. to foreign publics abroad.⁴⁴ The agency's motto innocuously read, "Telling America's story to the World," but the function of the USIA was more strategic, attempting to counter the anti-American propaganda being produced by the Soviets.⁴⁵ The ideological standoff between the United States and the Soviet Union dominated both international and national politics in the fifties; the "iron curtain" had divided the world into binaries of East and West, seemingly pitting democratic freedom against communist totalitarianism.⁴⁶ The USIA functioned as a cultural ambassador during this time, aimed at containing the spread of Communism by "winning the hearts and minds" of the Third World.⁴⁷ Included among the agency's activities was the circulation of American art exhibitions abroad, extolling the virtues of a democratic society and the greatness of the U.S. nation through the work of contemporary artists.⁴⁸ In the late 1950s, the agency picked up two exhibitions by Adams, and the photographer was likely involved in printing for the USIA's sponsorship of *This Is the American Earth* when he first received word of the commission by the

44. Nicholas John Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945-1989* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 81-2.

45. For more on the USIA and the agency's work during the cold war, see Kenneth Alan Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 2006).

46. Heefner, 549. For a discussion of Adams's feeling about the Cold War, see Spaulding, 249-52.

47. Ibid.; David Ryan, "Mapping Containment: The Cultural Construction of the Cold War," in *American Cold War Culture*, ed. by Douglas Field (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, Ltd, 2005), 59-60.

48. For more on art exhibitions sponsored by the USIA, see Eva Cockcroft, "Abstract Expressionism, Weapon of the Cold War," *ArtForum* 12, no. 10 (June 1974): 39-41; Serge Guilbaut and Thomas Repensek, "The New Adventures of the Avant-Garde in America: Greenberg, Pollock, or from Trotskyism to the New Liberalism of the 'Vital Center,'" *October* 15 (Winter 1980): 61-78; Eric J. Sandeen, *Picturing an Exhibition: The Family of Man and 1950s America* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995).

Bishop National Bank.⁴⁹ Through Adams's landscape images, the USIA hoped to demonstrate to the world the inextricable link between the nation's character and the American natural scene.

Given the previous decades' strife and a contemporary moment wrought with Cold War anxieties, the photographer's associations with the American West, loaded with the symbolism of the frontier, made him a desirable figure in certain circles. Photographer and critic Deborah Bright has commented on how easily and effectively his work fit into the politics of the postwar era, stating, "Adams's landscape epics played well as a familiar and comforting respite from images of the 1930s Dust Bowl, as well as the newer, more unfathomable horrors of Buchenwald and Hiroshima. The United States's new role as a global superpower, conquering new world markets in the name of freedom and democracy, found a ready imagery in the nineteenth century's version of Manifest Destiny: the conquest of the frontier."⁵⁰ Through their solid and sharp focus, Adams's photographs captured the grandeur ascribed to the West and stood as evidence that the core American values instilled through the land—hard work, individualism, and spirituality—were still relevant in the postwar years. As Bright notes, such images also performed well within the revived expansionist ideology of "manifest destiny," its dubious moral subtext newly co-opted by capitalist agenda. For the purposes of the Bishop National Bank, Adams's associations with the western frontier as the root of

49. The USIA sponsored two overseas exhibitions featuring Adams's landscapes in the period between 1957 and 1958: *This Is the American Earth* and *Nation of Nations*. Both exhibitions also toured within the U.S. For more, see Spaulding, 302-7.

50. Deborah Bright, "Machine in the Garden Revisited: American Environmentalism and Photographic Aesthetics," *Art Journal* 51, no. 2 (Summer 1992): 64. See also Bright's articles, "Of Mother Nature and Marlboro Men: An Inquiry into the Cultural Meanings of Landscape Photography" (1985) and "Victory Gardens: The Public Landscape of Postwar America" (1990).

American national identity aided in extending this imagined border and character across the Pacific.

The Islands of Hawaii

Early in the summer of 1957, after having named a price for his services and set some guidelines for his work, Adams wrote to the Bishop National Bank's ad agency with a few thoughts on "the Hawaii project."⁵¹ He proposed a horizontal format for the photobook to allow for "wonderful long sweeps of surf and hills" and suggested a "sequence of ideas" which more or less came to define the book's narrative structure and feel.⁵² One such suggestion was to open the photobook with an introductory section devoted to the Hawaiian landscape and early settlement of the islands centered on themes identified by Adams as "The Ocean and the Land," "The First People," and "The Colonization."⁵³ Although Joesting had previously expressed a desire to avoid treating the book as a historical project, Adams's impulse to include these subjects is significant. Landscapes representing Hawai'i's natural and built environment illustrate these themes, and are structured and selected to tell a coming-of-age story for the islands to the mainland. Rendered in the photographer's iconic style, the landscape images in the opening pages to *The Islands of Hawaii* operate both to extend a spatial boundary—that

51. Letter from Ansel Adams to Carl R. Pope, Jr. May 26, 1957. Center for Creative Photography, the University of Arizona, Tucson: Ansel Adams Archive. Copyright © The Ansel Adams Publishing Rights Trust. Adams sets his fee at \$10,000, which is the equivalent of about \$76,500 today. "The Inflation Calculator." <http://www.westegg.com/inflation/>. Accessed February 23, 2012.

52. Ansel Adams to Carl R. Pope, Jr. July 25, 1957. Center for Creative Photography, the University of Arizona, Tucson: Ansel Adams Archive. Copyright © The Ansel Adams Publishing Rights Trust.

53. Ibid.

of the American West—and reinforce a temporal boundary between past and present to establish Hawai'i unquestionably within the American nation.

As might be expected, the photobook begins with a series of landscape images in the manner of Adams's work from the mainland. A rhythm of panoramic views intermixed with details of lava rock and foliage creates an intimate sense of the Hawaiian scene. The islands' sun-soaked coastline conforms easily to Adams's aesthetic [fig. 1.2]. Here, the photographer presents readers with a scene consisting mostly of sandy beach and cascading waves, occupied neither by tourists nor by locals. The edge where water meets land progresses diagonally through the image, upwards from right to left, creating a sense of movement directed inland. In the background, the island's hills push into the sea and wrap around into the distance. In keeping with the photographer's method of carefully visualizing the picture prior to production, Adams captured the scene just as the retreating waves curl into themselves for an ocean return, leaving a glazed edge along the beach. Mist hovers near the background cliffs, cloaking them in an air of mystery. Without beach-goers or approaching ships to date the image, nature appears to exist in a primordial state—Hawai'i at the dawn of time.

Accompanying such images in *The Islands of Hawaii* is text written by the Bishop National Bank's Head of P.R., Edward Joesting. Before entering public relations with the bank, Joesting completed an English degree in California and he took the opportunity here to tell a story of the islands' beginning.⁵⁴ From the explosive power of volcanoes,

54. Little biographical information is available on Edward Joesting beyond a short bio in the back pages of *The Islands of Hawaii*. In her research on Adams's work in Hawai'i, scholar Anne Hammond notes that the centennial photo book seems to have initiated a life-long interests for Joesting who went on to produce an number of books on Hawaiian history including *Hawaii: An Uncommon History* (1972), *Eternal Hawaii* (1976), and *Kauai: The Separate Kingdom* (1984),

Joesting relates, trade winds and ocean currents shaped the islands and connected them to the world beyond their shores.⁵⁵ Adams visually articulates this idea of connection though the cropped view of his serene coastline and the inward movement of the composition's diagonal current. These elements create a picture of the ocean not as a vast expanse of separation, but as a humble servant to the land and a means of its access. In this section of the photobook representing "The Ocean and The Land," images of beautiful beaches and of coconut palms set against a rainbow reaffirm a vision of tropical paradise familiar to the mainland through the tourist industry. Rather than casting Hawai'i as a far off land, however, Adams, due largely to sheer reputation, imparts an association with the American West onto his images of the Hawaiian landscape. Such a link is further reinforced through conscientious compositional choice and the aesthetic similarity of Adams's Hawai'i photographs with his mainland images.

At the same time that Adams's opening photographs in *The Islands of Hawaii* carry an aura of the West with which the photographer was so closely linked, they also resist such a seamless extension of that border. The source of such disconnect lie, perhaps, in Adams's personal feelings and experiences in the islands. In letters written home to friends and family during a trip to Hawai'i a decade earlier in 1948, Adams expresses some ambivalence towards the islands and notes his initial frustration with the technical challenges created by its distinct climate and terrain—the heat, humidity, frequent rain, and high trade winds of the tropical environment complicated the

among others sponsored by the bank. See footnote 13 of Anne Hammond, "Ansel Adams and Hawaiian Landscape," *History of Photography* 26, no. 1 (Spring 2002): 46.

55. "Cooling trade winds blow over thousands of miles of the north Pacific before reaching the northern shores of this Islands chain. Ocean currents flow south from the Bay of Alaska, are warmed by the sun, fan out through the Islands and continue toward the Orient."

photographer's physically rigorous outings.⁵⁶ For his return a decade later to work on the Bishop National Bank's centennial project Adams would have been more familiar with the working conditions; yet a discordance is nonetheless sensed in some images. In a photograph of the Kilauea Crater that appears in the introductory section of *The Islands of Hawaii*, Adams positions the camera to capture a wide expanse of the still active volcano, emphasizing the contrast of billowy steam clouds rising from the dark earth [fig. 1.3]. An amorphous and continuous line of gray haze cuts horizontally across the top portion of the image, operating at once to signal a distant horizon and to flatten the upper space of the frame. The viewer looks over a flat arc of landmass at the base of the image into the crater below. The middle ground of the photograph presents the only point of entry into what the viewer might recognize as a physical space; yet even here, the scene feels less like a landscape and more like an ominous abstract painting—strokes of black revealing dynamic areas of white akin to Franz Kline. The image features alongside a foregrounded view of twisted lava rock on the opposite page [fig. 1.4]. Here, the solid mass reflects the sunlight, moving from areas of matte darkness and high gloss, between slick surface and harsh wrinkles. The space of the scene is more clearly marked than with the crater, but the small section of land and sky spied at the top of the frame offer little escape from the wall of rock whose hardened form still bears the force of the lava flow.

Adams's volcanic photographs serve to highlight the islands' formation just as Joesting's text in the book describes, but they also suggest some unease in the photographer, especially compared to the look and feel of an image such as *Mount Rainier, Sunrise*. Unlike the clear, open space in which the volcanic formation of Mount

56. Ansel Adams to Virginia Adams, April 1948, in *Ansel Adams: Letters and Images, 1916-1984*, 192-3. See also Hammond, 42.

Rainier is situated, which allows the viewer to locate a point of focus in the scene ahead and marvel at its serene presence, the ambiguity of space in the image of Kilauea Crater evokes a sense of disorientation and instability in viewers. In this manner, Adams's representation of the island volcano recalls tropes of the sublime—an experience of “a natural phenomenon that bewilders and threatens to overwhelm,” but which nonetheless occurs from a position that ensures safety.⁵⁷ Adams's representation finds precedent in the nineteenth-century paintings of Hawai'i's Volcano School, a group of non-native artists whose attraction to the drama of such noted areas resulted in works of similar perspective and composition [fig. 1.5].

Although the natural features of the Hawaiian volcano may not offer themselves as easily to the conventions of Adams's technique and style, the site represented a unique area of the islands that already existed as American land at the time of the statehood campaign and the Bishop National Bank's photobook project. In the years leading up to the 1898 annexation of the islands by the U.S. and continuing into the twentieth century, the sights of Kilauea and Haleakala, another volcano on a neighboring island, increasingly inspired foreign visitors, seduced by their sublime beauty, to proclaim a need for their protection. In 1907, shortly after annexation, the congressionally appointed Hawaii Territorial Legislature took measures towards such preservation, hosting 50 U.S. Congressmen and their wives for an island holiday to view the two volcanoes in hopes of

57. Houston Wood, *Displacing Natives: The Rhetorical Production of Hawai'i* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1999), 67. Wood provides an analysis of the sublime as expressed in literary accounts of Hawai'i's volcanoes by eighteenth and nineteenth-century visitors. Wood states, “Again and again, it seems, early travelers to Hawai'i's volcanoes used their very representations of the supposedly un-representable [the volcanoes sublimity] to reassert their mastery and, simultaneously, the universality of Euroamerican rhetoric.” Such mastery achieves new form through the National Parks System's ownership of the land, and perhaps in Adams's photographs.

garnering support to establish the areas as national reserves. In 1916, Congress finally moved to approve the proposal and “President Wilson signed the bill into law, thereby creating the twelfth National Park.”⁵⁸ To make it official, the Territorial Legislature handed over jurisdiction of the designated parklands to the U.S. Federal Government. This history demonstrates just how rooted American interests and activity in the islands had been throughout the twentieth century.⁵⁹ By the time the statehood campaign was fully underway, Hawai‘i’s land was marked as always-already American through the existence of the National Parks. Yet, if Adams’s photographs asserted the fact that a large portion of Hawai‘i’s land existed as American soil at mid-century, the protracted statehood campaign nonetheless stood as evidence that acceptance of the islands’ ethnically diverse population as American citizens had yet to occur.⁶⁰ Following his more primordial landscapes, Adams’s addresses the history of settlement in the islands through images of the built environment to position the colonial history of the islands as evidence for Hawai‘i’s contemporary social inclusion.

Hawai‘i’s Early Settlement

The fight against fascism during WWII led more generally to a critique of colonialism, and while European nations were facing head-on the revolutions of the anti-colonial

58. Frances Jackson, *National Parks in Hawaii: 50 years, 1916-1966; A Short History of Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, Haleakala National Park* (Honolulu: Hawaii Natural History Association, 1966), 43-6. The original Hawaiian National Parks encompassed land across different islands. Later, the parks become independent entities by island.

59. For more on the history of the national parks in Hawai‘i, see I. J. Castro, *A History of Hawaii National Park*, United States Department of the Interior, National Parks Service, June 1941.

60. This issue of land possession in Hawai‘i is a particularly contentious history. For a more a detailed analysis of the influence of colonization with regards to land tenure, see Lilikala Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires: Ko Hawai‘i Aina a me Na Koi Pu‘umake a ka Po‘e Haole* (Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1992).

movement, the U.S. too received its own share of criticism from the international community. The establishment of the United Nations created an international forum focused on human rights, and when the organization called for the decolonization of all non-self-governing territories under Western rule, the U.S. expressed its support.⁶¹ In turn, “professed ideals of American democracy came into direct and unavoidable conflict with the reality of the U.S. dependencies,” of which Hawai‘i remained.⁶² In a dialectical manner, the islands’ territorial status provided a point of criticism against the U.S. while the continuation of U.S. rule through statehood presented the potential for reform. In order to achieve this resolution and cement Hawai‘i’s place within the nation, its colonial history needed addressing. Adams seems to have recognized this in his initial planning for the book, and the manner in which he and Joesting approached the history of the islands’ settlement within *The Islands of Hawaii* lays the groundwork for a larger claim to national belonging for Hawai‘i’s residents that builds throughout the book.

Correspondingly, the story of “The First People” and “The Colonization” of Hawai‘i follow images of “The Ocean and the Land” in the opening pages of the photobook. Despite the fact that these two elements of Hawaiian settlement involve human agents, Adams’s images illustrating these themes remain characteristically figureless. They sit alongside the photographer’s primordial landscapes of ocean and volcano, distinguished only through the addition of built forms such as farms, roads, and buildings. In this way, Adams’s images continue to represent a Hawai‘i of the past. The historic narrative begins with the arrival of Polynesian settlers. In an image meant to highlight the lifestyle of Native Hawaiians, labeled *Fish pond at dawn near Kaunakakai*,

61. See Chapter XI: Declaration Regarding Non-Self-Governing Territories of the United Nations’ Charter; Heefner, 551.

62. Heefner, 550-1.

Molokai, a dark mass of rocks fills the foreground of the frame, acting as a blockade for the sea beyond its edge [fig. 1.6]. A parapet branches off perpendicularly to complete the pond's enclosure and section off a pool of water from the open sea. The wall reaches out like a Neptunian tentacle towards the horizon, thinning from the perspective before curving left and seeming to fade into a distant piece of land. The water ripples and reflects the dark clouds moving in overhead at the left to create the faint shape of a parabola, symmetrically balanced between the sky and sea. Joesting provides a description of the site, applauding Native Hawaiians as skillful fishermen who would use the ponds to keep stocks of live fish to feed their families.⁶³ Although Joesting explains that such ponds are still passed down through the generations, the reduction of the fishpond at Molokai to its formal elements—dark terrain against calm water and cloudy sky—acts to disassociate it from any type of function. Moreover, the rock wall at the base of the frame forecloses the space from active participants.

The prevailing absence of human beings throughout this section on “The First People” lends the sites of Adams’s images to interpretations of disuse or non-functionality, and Joesting’s accompanying text, which tends to discuss Native Hawaiians in the past tense, compounds a sense of distance manifest in Adams’s photographs. The only exception to Adams’s emptied landscapes occurs in a single portrait, nestled within this section between a view of palm trees and the aestheticized fishpond. The first human face to greet the reader in *The Islands of Hawaii* is that of Naluahine Kaopua, identified as a Native Hawaiian through the image’s contextual placement within the book [fig. 1.7]. The man’s face and the top of his shoulders are the only body parts visible in the

63. “The essentials of daily life were these—a taro patch for poi and the skill to catch fish from the sea. ...On calm leeward shores fish ponds stretch for miles, prizes still passed from one generation to another.”

image as he looks directly into the camera. Adams's closely cropped portrait visually carries the relationship between the natural environment and the people as addressed in Joesting's text. Positioning Kaopua against a pattern of diagonal stripes that recall the palms from the neighboring image, Adams ties Kaopua's body to the Hawaiian natural scene. Kaopua is notably older. His eyes most of all reveal his years; framed by wrinkles and silver, wiry hairs they are rheumy and do not quite focus on the viewer's gaze. His expression is thoughtful and he seems to offer a slight smile. The intimacy of this exchange between subject and viewer is endearing, yet the implication of the photograph's placement within the photobook is problematic, rendering the indigenous community of Hawai'i as obsolete. As the only Native Hawaiian pictured in this section, surrounded by images of unoccupied and seemingly un-functional sights, Kaopua's gives the sense of an aged and fading community.⁶⁴

The tone of images representing western settlement within *The Islands of Hawaii* is markedly different from that of Hawai'i's Polynesian settlement, but the story they create similarly remains historical in the absence of the human figure. The scenes that illustrate this thread of Hawai'i's settlement do so through sights related to the work of Christian missionaries in the islands. Rather than overcast skies and dramatic spaces, the white clapboard, New England-style architecture that formed the churches and homes of these individuals appear brightly lit by sunshine and surrounded by spry foliage [fig. 1.8]. Although the imperial activity of Western nations was under scrutiny at the time, Adams and Joesting offer the colonization of Hawai'i through a positive frame. Indeed, Joesting

64. Adams's interpretation of the Native Hawaiian community mirrors the notion of "a vanishing race" associated with the plight of Native Americans in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. This notion was famously represented and disseminated through Edward S. Curtis's photographs of older Native Americans.

echoes the nineteenth-century rhetoric of the missionaries, noting in his text how “the importance of their calling led the missionaries to labor without rest.” An image of the first print shop appears above this text, linking colonization with an idea of progress—a combination of knowledge and technology that figures significantly in the rest of the book. Switching his composition from vast, expansive views of nature to tightly composed images of buildings set snugly within their leafy surroundings, Adams too adds weight and permanency to the missionary cause.

The manner in which Adams and Joesting treat these early settlers of Hawai’i—the Native Hawaiians and the New England missionaries—draw important distinctions between the two communities and begin to shape an argument for statehood. The notion of “settlement” in and of itself weakens any claim to indigeneity. Additionally, at the same moment that the photobook introduces “The First People” and their way of life to readers, the images and text in this section suggest the near disappearance of this population. In presenting Native Hawaiian culture as timeless, as aged and docile, or as unattended, the narrative of the book strategically represents the American colonization of Hawai’i as one of altruism, success, and perseverance. Indeed, by placing the section on Native Hawaiians first and constructing a story of the community’s decline before ever broaching the topic of the Western settlement of the islands within the photobook, Adams and Joesting disconnect the causal relationship between the two narratives. In this manner, *The Islands of Hawaii* makes no account for the devastating ills brought upon the islands’ indigenous population precisely because of colonization, including disease, cultural genocide, and an unlawful revolution. Just as the missionaries had themselves believed, and in line with popular knowledge among mainlanders of the Native American

experience, the narrative of *The Islands of Hawaii* recognizes western presence as the islands' salvation.

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Adams's work in the opening pages to *The Islands of Hawaii* demonstrates his awareness of the visual frame's authority and the power of placement within a narrative progression. Through compositional choices, he pictures Hawai'i in relationship to the mainland, and "the sequence of ideas" proposed by Adams identifies the western discovery of the islands as a key turning point. Joesting too was aware of the power of words to further shape a visual reading. In a check list of possible sites and people to photograph, presumably drawn up by Joesting for Adams's visit in the spring of 1958, the type-written text, "Lahainaluna – first printshop ~~in the Islands?~~" is found in the subject list for the island of Maui. A few handwritten notes provide additional information, and it is telling that the phrase "in the Islands?" would be crossed out and replaced by the penned words "west of Rockies."⁶⁵ In the photobook, the image appears in the section on colonization labeled simply as *First printing shop, Lahainaluna, Maui*, yet the subject list reveals how Adams and Joesting consciously re-imagined the islands as an extension of the American West. In the opening pages of *The Islands of Hawaii*, Adams's photographs and Joesting's text reshape Hawai'i's history to marginalize the islands' indigenous population and to emphasize the positive impact of Christian missionaries in order to shape the bank's desired future—American statehood.

The missionary architecture marks a distinct transition from unpopulated landscapes in the opening pages of *The Islands of Hawaii* to a heavy emphasis on

65. Checklist titled "Ansel Adams Project," February 2, 1958. Center for Creative Photography, the University of Arizona, Tucson: Ansel Adams Archive.

portraiture and people that appears in the remainder of the book's pages. Returning to the "sequence of ideas" Adams's developed in the summer of 1957, the photographer builds on his proposed introductory section, envisioning the central body of the photobook as "a constantly-shifting presentation of the contemporary aspects" of Hawai'i.⁶⁶ He identifies the themes of "The Modern Land," "The Modern People," "The Industries and Culture," and "Hawaii and the World" to frame the islands' present-day existence. The next section considers the representation of these themes in the book with respect to notions of race, gender, and class as they defined the mainland at mid-century. Avoiding the "conventional subjects" associated with Hawai'i—the tourist, the hula, the hotel—in order to draw upon and, at times, resist the conventions of the United States, Adams and Joesting leverage recent events taking shape on the mainland to position Hawai'i as an integral participant in American nationalism.

66. Ansel Adams to Carl H. Pope, Jr., July 25, 1957. Center for Creative Photography, the University of Arizona, Tucson: Ansel Adams Archive. Copyright © The Ansel Adams Publishing Rights Trust.

Section II.

“Modern Land, Modern People”: Race, Gender, and Industry in *The Islands of Hawaii*

While the previous chapter ended with a discussion of Hawai‘i’s past as represented in the opening pages of *The Islands of Hawaii*, the current chapter follows the photobook’s structure and shifts to consider how Adams and the bank’s Head of Public Relations, Edward Joesting, pictured Hawai‘i’s present. Through unpopulated landscapes, selective presentation of Hawai‘i’s indigenous population, and careful handling of the island’s colonization, Adams and Joesting position Hawai‘i within the American myth of destined expansion. Yet, even with a firm grounding for the islands’ land as American, the task remained for Adams and the bank to demonstrate that Hawai‘i’s residents—more than 60% nonwhite—also embodied an American character and were themselves worthy of full citizenship with the United States.⁶⁷ By the time Adams began work on the centennial project, long-standing accusations of communist influence in Hawai‘i or of residents’ cultural incompatibility with mainlanders from those opposed to statehood were more clearly tied to concerns over the islands’ racial and ethnic diversity. Within the Cold War atmosphere, social anxieties around race and gender permeating the U.S. tended to collapse into the looming fear over the threat of communism.⁶⁸ As the government looked outward, attempting to secure the United States’s image and political influence abroad, Americans at home turned inward, grasping to traditional (and largely

67. More than 80% of the Islands’ population already held American citizenship at the time of the statehood debates. Nonetheless, their participation in national politics was limited during territorial rule. Roger Bell, *Last Among Equals: Hawaiian Statehood and American Politics* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1984), 267.

68. For more on the dynamics of race perceptions during the Cold War, see Gary Gerstle “The Cold War, Anticommunism, and a Nation in Flux, 1946-1960,” in *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 239-267.

imagined) social roles and hierarchies as sources of stability in the wake of the preceding decades' trauma. In *The Islands of Hawaii*, Adams and Joesting foster mainland identification with the community in the Pacific by further engaging national myths, old and new, through photographs of the islands' social, cultural, and commercial life.

“The Family of Man” meets “Happy Mixtures”

Perhaps the most pervasive myth during the 1950s was the belief in the universal and foundational quality of the nuclear family consisting of a married heterosexual couple and their biological children. This belief dominated postwar American political and popular consciousness as the country settled into a moment of relative peace. Historians Douglas T. Miller and Marion Nowak note in their comprehensive study of the era, “The overwhelming emphasis on the family gave people a sense of place and personal identity.”⁶⁹ Images of the nuclear family in popular culture also provided a sense of national identity for the U.S. and a legitimizing force for the decade's activities, acting as a symbol of American prosperity and democracy both at home and abroad.⁷⁰ As a prominent example, Henry Luce's *Life* magazine offered a weekly photo album of happy American families [fig. 2.1]. Images such as that featured on the cover of a 1953 special issue highlighted the nuclear family at the center of the U.S. economy and validated Luce's earlier declaration of living amidst “the American century.”⁷¹ In related fashion,

69. Douglas T. Miller and Marion Nowak, *The Fifties: The Way We Really Were* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1975), 11.

70. Eric Sandeen, “‘The Show You See With Your Heart’: *The Family of Man* on Tour in the Cold War World,” in *The Family of Man, 1955-2001: Humanism and Postmodernism: A Reappraisal of the Photo Exhibition by Edward Steichen*, ed. by Jean Back and Viktoria Schmidt-Lisenhoff (Marburg: Jonas Verlag, 2004), 109-11.

71. “The American Century” was the title of an essay by Luce published in the February 17, 1941 issue of *Life*. In it, he outlined his belief in the power of the nation and the paternal role it should

Edward Steichen's exhibition *The Family of Man*, mounted in 1955 at the Museum of Modern Art, achieved blockbuster success.⁷² Drawn largely from *Life*'s photo archives and inspired by the graphic style of the photo essay, Steichen, the exhibition curator, featured over five hundred images from photographers around the world. Steichen arranged the images thematically around aspects of the human experience so that visitors moved through the galleries progressively from birth, childhood, marriage, and family, as well as more abstract themes, such as music and love. The effect of this categorization, particularly on images of such harsh or unpleasant subject matter as that featured in photographs taken for the Farm Security Administration during the Great Depression, was to decontextualize and thus defuse their emotive associations. Steichen hoped the exhibition could tame Cold War tensions and anxieties by emphasizing a common humanity, "an essential oneness of mankind throughout the world."⁷³ The show subsequently travelled internationally with the USIA, reaching over nine million viewers during its eight-year run.⁷⁴ Despite its best intentions to transcend national borders, *The Family of Man* inevitably carried forth a narrow and largely idealized conception of the human experience, one grounded in an American perspective. The show was extremely

play around the world. Wendy Kozol offers a more in depth reading of this cover image in her essay, "The Kind of People Who Make Good Americans": Nationalism and *Life*'s Family Ideal," in *Looking for America: The Visual Production of Nation and People*, ed. by Ardis Cameron (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005).

72. For more, see Eric J. Sandeen. *Picturing an Exhibition: The Family of Man and 1950s America* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995)

73. *The Family of Man* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, in association with Maco Magazine Corporation, 1955), published in conjunction with the exhibition "The Family of Man" shown at the Museum of Modern Art and internationally, 5.

74. Abigail Solomon-Godeau, "The Family of Man: Refurbishing Humanism for a Postmodern Age," in *Family of Man 1955-2001: Humanism and Postmodernism: A Reappraisal of the Photo Exhibition by Edward Steichen*, ed. by Jean Back and Viktoria Schmidt-Linsenhoff (Marburg: Jonas Verlag, 2004), 29. See also, Nicholas John Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945-1989* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 115-7.

popular and highly influential in its time, although contemporary critics have since rejected the exhibition's pretense of humanism in the midst of stark global inequalities and structural oppressions prevalent in the U.S.

Adams lent a few of his landscapes to the exhibition, and while he strongly disapproved of Steichen's treatment of the photographic medium as a conduit for his message rather than an artistic medium in its own right, the impact the exhibition had on Adams is evident in his work from the 1950s, including *The Islands of Hawaii*.⁷⁵ For example, the photobook shares the same designer as *The Family of Man* exhibition, former Bauhaus member Herbert Bayer. More significantly, *The Islands of Hawaii* similarly places emphasis on the ideal of the nuclear family. In the hands of Adams and Joesting, the image of the family is most of all a national symbol, one that highlights the American character of modern-day Hawai'i.

Adams's photograph of a smiling family of four on the steps outside their ranch-style home sets the tone for a narrative of the Hawaiian community in *The Islands of Hawaii* [fig. 2.2]. Identified as the Larry Thiim family, the figures are among the first individuals the reader encounters following the transition from the islands' past to its present, and they represent the first image of family life to appear in the book. If the family increasingly appeared as a microcosm of the nation, the posed figures of Adams's photograph form the perfect image of familial stability with which to announce the

75. The source of Adams's disapproval of *The Family of Man* was perhaps both personal and professional. Adams held some animosity towards Steichen, who he felt pushed out his good friend Beaumont Newhall from the Photography Department at MoMA during Newhall's wartime absence. Additionally, Adams believed Steichen's treatment of the images was careless and contrasted with his own feelings about the function of photography. For more, see Jonathan Spaulding, *Ansel Adams and the American Landscape: A Biography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 300-3.

modern, American population of Hawai'i.⁷⁶ The triad of father, son, and mother and daughter, dressed predominantly in white, creates a balanced and solid presence against the dynamic structural angles and darker shades of the photograph's background. The modern, albeit generic, architecture of the house recalls the developing suburbs of the mainland while the waxy leaves of tropical foliage visible along the left side of the image locate the setting specifically in Hawai'i. Though the figures in the image do not make direct eye contact with the photographer, they nonetheless seem aware of Adams's presence. Their slight self-consciousness in response to being photographed—evidenced in the shy retreat of the little girl into her mother or the averted gaze of the father—adds to the veracity of the image.⁷⁷ The space nonetheless feels relaxed, and the familial triad opens up to include the figure outside the frame, initially fulfilled by Adams and subsequently the viewer. The Thiim family appears here as an everyday, average family of Hawai'i in a way that was easily relatable to mainland readers of the book. The photograph of the Thiims also held significance for the way the nation imagined itself, specifically by way of class, race, and gender.

The domestic setting signals a middle-class standing for the figures in the Thiim family photograph and demonstrates Hawai'i's share of the postwar prosperity experienced on the mainland.⁷⁸ This sense of economic affluence carries throughout the book and was an important point to stress for a territory working to establish their equal

76. For a discussion of the function of the family trope in constructing and legitimization of nationalisms, see Anne McClintock, "Family Feuds: Gender, Nationalism and the Family," *Feminist Review* 44, Nationalisms and National Identities (Summer 1993): 64-7.

77. Wendy Kozol makes this observation in her discussion of the representation of families in *Life* magazine; see "The Kind of People Who Make Good Americans": Nationalism and *Life*'s Family Ideal."

78. Miller and Nowak, 9-11. See also the chapter, "The Happy Home Corporation and Baby Factory."

standing with the mainland. Furthermore, the power balance subtly articulated in the arrangement and appearance of the Thiim family members forges a point of identification with American society through normative ideas of gender. The father, the only figure directly named in the image's text, leans causally against the exterior wall of the house. One arm rests along the figure's side, hand in pocket, while the other comfortably supports his weight against the edge of the domicile's brick base. Standing at the apex of the triangle, he appears literally and symbolically as the cornerstone of the domestic structure and the familial unit. He fulfills his prescribed role as the breadwinner. Indeed, the figure's half-dressed appearance—a white undershirt tucked into his dark slacks with belt, watch, and black leather shoes displaying a slight sheen along the toe—suggests his recent return from work. His body language and smile express a sense of pride in home and family. This pride seems notably directed towards his son as he looks down and to the left where the boy stands. The son, mirroring his father's dress with the youthful addition of baseball cap, looks away from his task of watering the outside plants to meet the gaze of his mother and little sister at the right side of the frame. The father and the son signal the realm of labor, whether seemingly in respite or in adolescent training through household chores. In their singular stance and slightly distanced positions, they represent to varying degrees masculine work, independence, and authority.

By contrast, the mother and daughter stand in a close embrace on the steps near the residential entrance. While the father stands in as material support, Adams's photograph clearly pictures the mother as the emotional support in the family, lovingly enveloping her daughter and holding an intimate gaze with her son. The others in the image appear casually dressed, while the mother is stylishly adorned for the camera in a

white dress with soft horizontal lines running across its fore-gore skirt, accessorized with metallic wedged sandals, pearlescent earrings, and a wedding band. Like the mirrored dress of father and son, the daughter's outfit is a youthful version of her mother's. Yet, unlike the sense that the boy is transitioning into adulthood, the little girl's wrinkled frock and bare feet occlude such a reading. She rather appears content in her childish state, attached at the hip to her mother. Mrs. Thiim counters her husband's status as breadwinner, appearing as a benevolent guardian of the doorway visible in the background and the domestic sphere into which it leads.

Readers of *The Islands of Hawaii* could easily link the familial affection, economic standing, and internal dynamics of the family in Adams's image to what they knew of American families in the mid-twentieth century. Yet the placement of the image within the photobook—located on a two-page spread highlighting the Chinese community in Hawai'i—and the slightly darker features of the mother and the two children—laid bare through their warm weather dress—interrupts the dominate image of the white American family so often occupying the pages of *Life* [fig. 2.3]. In this context the discarded flip-flops on the front steps of the home offer a subtle mark of tradition pointing to the Asian heritage of the Thiims. The narrative built through the paired images of the page spread and Joesting's accompanying text is significant, especially given the "loss of China" to communism in 1949.⁷⁹ To the left of the Thiim family photo appears an image of a cemetery, each stone marked with a Chinese symbol. While this may strike the reader as an odd, if not morose, juxtaposition, the text in the book declares the naturalness of the scene. Coming from China to seize the so-called "golden opportunity" of plantation work in Hawai'i, immigrants "buried their dead in the earth of

79. Gerstle, 257.

their adopted homeland.” The opposite page features directly composed portraits of Police Chief Dan Liu and Dr. Fred K. Lam, depictions that recall the closely cropped composition of Adams’s representation of Naluahine Kaopua from earlier in the photobook. The concentrated focus on the facial features of these individuals, repeated in portraits throughout *The Islands of Hawaii*, resonates with the colonial use of photography as an agent of racial and ethnographic categorizing, yet Adams takes care to picture each individual dignity and agency. Adams had employed this visual strategy years before when photographing Japanese and Japanese-American internees at the Manzanar War Relocation Center in the early 1940s. The Manzanar images were published under the title *Born Free and Equal* in 1944, and Adams’s believed they could serve a valuable purpose. Writing to Nancy Newhall in 1943 about the project, Adams stated, “The War Relocation Authority is doing a magnificent job, and is firm and ruthless in their definitions of true loyalty. In effect these pictures imply a test of true Americanism, and suggest an approach to treatments of other minority groups. I may be wrong, but I feel I have material of tremendous value.”⁸⁰ While Adams firmly believed in the Constitutional rights of American minorities detained at Manzanar, he nonetheless qualified citizenship with the existence of “loyalty,” a quality he felt his photographs were able to capture in individuals. In this page spread representing the islands’ community members, the ethnicity of each figure is conspicuously mentioned, yet their “loyalty” is depicted in their notable contributions to Hawaiian society—a stable family, a watchful police chief, and a caring doctor. As such, the collection of images within this

80. Ansel Adams to Nancy Newhall, 1943. Ansel Adams, Mary Street Alinder, and Andrea Gray Stillman, *Ansel Adams: Letters and Images, 1916-1984* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1988), 143-5. For a discussion of how Adams’s came to the project and the circulation and function of the Manzanar images see, Spaulding, 198-210.

page spread stresses Hawai'i's residents as "good" citizens, committed to their "homeland."⁸¹

As the statehood debates progressed throughout the 1950s, complaints raised by the opposition against Hawai'i's perceived economic shortcomings and cultural differences masked beliefs of racial superiority among white Southern Democrats. Additionally, a small, but incensed, population of white conservative Americans openly voiced their displeasure with the idea of admitting a largely nonwhite state.⁸² Statehood could lend power to the Asian majority in Hawai'i and place a nonwhite Congressman in Washington D.C., one who would presumably support the passage of civil rights legislation.⁸³ The fact that a nonwhite population had gained power in Hawai'i and the persistence of interracial families in the islands such as the Thiims surely raised statehood opponents' fears given the mounting pressures to break down racial barriers on the mainland during the 1950s.⁸⁴ Just as the events of WWII had given Hawai'i leverage for statehood, disenfranchised groups on the mainland, particularly African-Americans in the South, were similarly beginning to challenge their social and institutional discrimination.

81. Many similarities exist between the images and narrative employed by Adams in his work on Manzanar and that used to represent the American-ness of Hawaiian society. Further research and discussion on the connection between these two projects and other documentary projects completed by Adams during this period is intended.

82. For more on the campaign for statehood and the debates that ensued within Congress, see Bell, *Last Among Equals: Hawaiian Statehood and American Politics*.

83. In his study of the statehood debates, Bell quotes New Mexico Senator Clinton Anderson, an advocate for Hawai'i's admission, who wrote in a confidential letter in 1953, "The Southern Democratic Senators who are greatly concerned about civil rights are not enthusiastic about statehood for either Hawaii or Alaska or both because they do not want to add two or four Senators who might not support them in keeping their filibuster going against civil rights laws." See Bell, 179; Anderson to H.D. Halfhill, March 23, 1953, container 541, Anderson Papers.

84. In 1957, 34 % of all marriages in Hawai'i were between individuals of different race. See "Table 75. Interracial Marriages: 1912-1965," in *Demographic Statistics of Hawaii: 1778-1965*, ed. by Robert C. Schmitt (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1968), 211. Many mainland states maintained anti-miscegenation laws until the U.S. Supreme Court ruled such laws unconstitutional in 1967 through *Loving v. Virginia*.

Throughout the decade, as statehood debates continued within Congress, the U.S. witnessed events of domestic terrorism carried out by white conservatives against blacks. As the legality of anti-miscegenation laws and segregation came under pressure, violence and tactics of fear were increasingly employed to maintain racial hierarchies and boundaries.

A number of incidents during this decade, including the murder of a fourteen-year-old boy named Emmett Till in 1955 for allegedly whistling at a white woman, received sustained national and international media coverage—photography played a pivotal role in galvanizing the black community to demand greater justice.⁸⁵ Against the backdrop of the Cold War, the violence and inequalities faced by minorities within U.S. borders became a liability for the nation's role as leader of the free world. Thus, while the issue of Hawai'i's racial diversity fueled political opposition, it was also the key factor repeatedly raised by statehood proponents arguing for Hawai'i's admission.⁸⁶ In light of negative attention surrounding mainland race relations, many within the U.S. government viewed statehood for the multicultural, mixed-race islands as a necessary gesture to uphold democratic ideals for an audience abroad.⁸⁷ Statehood proponents championed Hawai'i as a "racial paradise" and touted its ethnic diversity as evidence that American democracy was available to all. Given U.S. race relations at the time, the emphasis on ethnicity in *The Islands of Hawaii*—highlighted in the description qualifying Adams's family portrait, "The Larry Thiim family of Danish-French-Hawaiian-Chinese descent"—stands as an affirmative declaration of diversity, and served to distance the

85. Notably, a photograph of the beaten and swollen body of Till in his casket appeared on the cover of the September 15, 1955 issue of *Jet*, a nationwide black magazine.

86. Gretchen Heefner, "'A Symbol of the New Frontier': Hawaiian Statehood, Anti-Colonialism, and Winning the Cold War" *Pacific Historical Review* 74, no. 4 (November 2005): 547.

87. *Ibid.*, 549.

islands form the racial tensions of the South. For a mainland audience forced to view the Thiim family and their neighbors through Adams's positive frame, the idea of racial harmony in Hawai'i also provided a model for peaceful solutions at home, if perhaps not so extreme as widespread intermarriage.⁸⁸

Indeed, at moments within *The Islands of Hawaii*, Adams and Joesting seemed acutely aware of the islands' potential relationship to the situation unfolding in the South, and took the opportunity to stress the harmonious quality of the Hawaiian community. In September of 1957, as Adams made the first of two visits that he would take to Hawai'i for work on the Bishop National Bank's project, news of the Little Rock Nine and the desegregation of Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas dominated the headlines. Adams and Joesting were surely aware of the tensions surrounding this event and the stirring media images of African-American high school students surrounded by angry mobs as they walked away after having been barred from entering the school. Following weeks of impasse and only upon the escort of federal troops were the students able to enter the school doors to begin attending classes with their white peers [figs. 2.4 and 2.5]. The circumstances of Little Rock became a measure of discordance between American ideals of equality and the reality of discrimination faced by people of color. A number of Adams's projects during the 1940s and 1950s, including the Manzanar project and the resulting book *Born Free and Equal*, indicate that issues of race and citizenship were on the photographer's mind.⁸⁹ Additionally, in the mid-1950s, Adams completed a project

88. The idea of Hawai'i as a racial paradise was an American myth itself. For more on the history of this myth, see John Chock Rosa, "The Coming of the Neo-Hawaiian American race': Nationalism and Metaphors of the Melting Pot in Popular Accounts of Mixed-Race Individuals," in *The Sum of Our Parts: Mixed-Heritage Asian Americans*, ed. by Teresa Williams-León and Cynthia L. Nakashima, 49-60 (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001).

89. For a critical discussion of Adams's Manzanar photographs, see John Streamas, "Toyo

on African-American education that was never realized due to difficulties with finding a publisher.⁹⁰ The events in Arkansas surely struck a chord with the photographer, one discernible in his work with the Bishop National Bank.

Within *The Islands of Hawaii*, Adams provides a counter to the harsh depictions of the Little Rock school year with an image of children peacefully walking the grounds of McKinley High School in Honolulu [fig 2.6].⁹¹ Adams has composed the image to position the viewer at a distance, looking out over the scene from a position above. The weather is pleasant, the atmosphere welcoming, and the figures stroll in small, intimate groups dispersed throughout the foreground and background plane. They carry books and purses, and for the most part, their backs are to the viewer as they walk in the direction of the stately building in the distance, suggesting a morning arrival for class. The camera is set too far back to capture any telling details about the students' race or ethnicity, but Joesting's text picks up on a narrative of racial harmony. "Today, in small one-room buildings in the country, as in large city schools," Joesting states, "classrooms are filled with children and teachers whose parents or grandparents have come from nearly every country in the world. They form, what is surely, the world's most cosmopolitan school system." Through text and photograph, Adams and Joesting collaborate in constructing Hawai'i schools as expansive, well attended, and unique, particularly in their "cosmopolitan" nature, a description that carries not only connotations of worldliness, but

Suyemoto, Ansel Adams, and the Landscape of Justice," in *Recovered Legacies: Authority and Identity in Early Asian American literature*, ed. by Keith Lawrence and Floyd Cheung (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005) and Jasmine Alinder, "Displaced Smiles: Photography and the Incarceration of Japanese Americans During World War II," *Prospects* 30 (2005):519-37.

90. Spaulding, 211. Limited information is currently available on this unpublished work. Future research is intended.

91. McKinley High School was named after President William McKinley who was instrumental in acquiring Hawai'i as a U.S. territory.

also of wealth. Adams's image of McKinley High seems all the more significant given the images from Little Rock that appeared just a year before the publication of *The Islands of Hawaii*.

Yet the function of depicting education in Hawai'i or of families resulting from intermarriage between individuals of different ethnicity—what Adams's would refer to as “happy mixtures” in his correspondence with the bank—was twofold.⁹² While statehood proponents sought to emphasize multiplicity for an international audience, the tactic for selling Hawai'i to the mainland was to emphasize assimilation in order to counteract mainland worries of cultural incompatibility with Hawai'i's residents.⁹³ Historically, on the mainland as well as in Hawai'i, the schoolroom served as an integral space in which to carry out colonial agendas. Indigenous youth were instructed in the language, values, and knowledge of the colonizing party at the expense of indigenous cultural practices and beliefs. The peaceful school image and the emphasis on genealogy in the text of the Thiim family photograph reaffirm the myth of Hawai'i as a racial paradise. They also illustrate a key strategy through which to manage issues of the islands' racial and ethnic diversity for a mainland public, demonstrating how statehood rhetoric grounded a discourse of Hawai'i's ethnic diversity in a narrative of assimilation to American values and traditions. Thus, rather than viewing the overt display of pluralism in *The Islands of Hawaii* as a celebration of difference, one might follow scholar Judy Rohrer's understanding of the discourse of racial harmony in Hawai'i—of which intermarriage becomes the ultimate index—ultimately aids in the normalization of whiteness in the

92. Ansel Adams to Carl H. Pope, Jr., July 25, 1957. Center for Creative Photography, the University of Arizona, Tucson: Ansel Adams Archive. Copyright © The Ansel Adams Publishing Rights Trust.

93. Heefner, 569.

islands.⁹⁴ The multiethnic, nuclear family of Hawai'i and the impact of the schools are markers of the islands' colonization and serve the neocolonial goal of Hawaiian statehood through the suggestion of the islands society's successful assimilation to "the American way of life." Despite the rhetorical prominence given to cosmopolitanism in *The Islands of Hawaii*, the "happy mixtures" of Hawai'i, like the global "family of man," fall victim to a hegemonic ideology that absorbs cultural difference.

At Work in Hawai'i

As much as it was the bank's intention for *The Islands of Hawaii* to promote the archipelago on behalf of statehood, the book also served to valorize the bank itself and its cooperative and crucial relationship to the industries it served. These goals were not mutually exclusive, for even the manner in which Adams and Joesting handle the subject of industry within *The Islands of Hawaii* operated to locate the territory on equal footing with the mainland's economic system, and continued to evidence the American-ness of the island community. The struggle against communism that characterized the Cold War period tied capitalism more closely to the idea of democracy and the national ethos towards freedom translated into a belief in free enterprise.⁹⁵ American businesses large and small, utilizing newly established public relations departments, increasingly sought new ways to demonstrate the virtues of their company and American capitalism more broadly for the American people. On the part of the Bishop National Bank, *The Islands of*

94. Judy Rohrer, "Disrupting the 'melting pot': Racial Discourse in Hawai'i and the Naturalization of Haole," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 31, no. 6 (2008): 1111-16. For more on the role of women in Native Hawaiian society and the impacts of colonization see Jocelyn Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence: Rank, Gender, and Colonialism in the Hawaiian Islands* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990).

95. John Fousek, *To Lead the Free World: American Nationalism and the Cultural Roots of the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 128-9.

Hawaii is an example of such efforts, if perhaps on a smaller scale.⁹⁶ In addition to featuring Adams's landscapes and images of the social and cultural life of the islands, the photobook also highlights the industrial activities of Hawai'i. Whether representing industries commonly associated with the islands or drawing new attention to unfamiliar businesses, the photobook perpetuates the ideology of "people's capitalism"—a notion gaining prominence in the 1950s that big business was benevolent and American capitalism provided adequate work and resources for all.⁹⁷ The myth of "people's capitalism" drew on older myths of American individualism and self-determination and, given U.S. concerns for the spread of communism in Asia, it was a significant narrative for Hawai'i's Asian population. Reaffirming contemporaneous beliefs about American democracy and superiority through images of Hawaiian industries, Adams and Joesting draw the islands into the central project of the mainland, capitalism.

Along the lines of benevolent big business, such sentiment is apparent in a page spread devoted to highlighting the sugar plantations of the islands, an industry among the first to appear in the photobook. Recalling Adams's empty landscapes from the opening pages, a mill sits in an open field abundant with sugar cane in the spread's central image [fig. 2.7]. The camera is set parallel to the depicted horizon, allowing land and sky to share nearly equal parts of the image. The view spreads out from a shadowed bushel of sugar cane at the right side and converges tightly on the left where a dirt road angles in

96. While the exact number of copies originally produced of *The Islands of Hawaii* is unknown, best estimates based on letters exchanged between Adams and the bank locate the number around 5,000 copies for first printing. A second printing of 20,000 copies took place in 1961, after statehood was achieved. Roland Meyer to Ansel Adams, November 28, 1961. Center for Creative Photography, the University of Arizona, Tucson: Ansel Adams Archive. Copyright © The Ansel Adams Publishing Rights Trust.

97. For more on this shift see the chapter "People's Capitalism and Other Edsels" in Miller and Nowak. For more on "People's Capitalism" as rhetoric supported by the USIA, see Cull, 117-20.

sharply from the bottom to meet the distant mountainous border of land in the background at the edge of the frame. The mill seems almost quaintly situated in the midst of the unruly crop still awaiting harvest. Only the tall cement stack that stretches pin-straight into the sky and the hazy aura of an escaping gaseous substance distracts from the photograph's picturesque appeal. In a different geographical setting, these elements might signal the warmth and comfort of a cottage fireplace and chimney, but the tropical island climate and the context in which the image appears draws the viewer back to an understanding of work and industrial production: the fumes signifying the byproduct of sugar cane in the process of refinement.

At the time of the Bishop National Bank's commission, environmentalism was just beginning to take shape as an organized movement.⁹⁸ An early supporter of conservation efforts on the mainland, Adams often lent his voice and photographs to the cause. Yet, like many at the time, he held a middle ground believing "that economic growth and prosperity were not incompatible with preservationist goals."⁹⁹ Thus, rather than turning a critical eye to the affects of industrialization on the land, Adams naturalizes the agricultural industry. The gaseous substance that exits the mill in Adams's photograph dissipates and mingles with the clouds without cause for concern.¹⁰⁰ In accordance with the context of *The Islands of Hawaii* and the decade's pro-business climate, Adams has pictured the mill as only a tiny and unobtrusive element of the bigger

98. Spaulding, 286.

99. Ibid., 266.

100. Adams's treatment of industry in the plantation images contrasts with a later trend in landscape photography developed in the 1970s, and highlighted in the 1975 exhibition *New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-Altered Landscape*, in which photographers directed a critical eye on the impact of commercial and industrial activities on the environment.

natural world in which it is found: nature appears capable of absorbing any potentially harmful side effects of industrial activities.

As with the sugar mill, the human-made elements in other images of the plantation found on Adams's page spread similarly recede into their natural environment, while the human figure is characteristically absent. On a sugar plantation in Hilo, Hawai'i, the crisscrossing beams of an actinometer station, used to measure the intensity of sun radiation on the field, echo the crop from which the station appears to grow forth [fig. 2.8]. Adams has positioned the camera to fill the frame with an expanse of sky, where the dark clouds heavy with rain block the sun, forming a halo at the top of the image. The station and the sugar cane are dramatically shadowed, reduced to silhouettes. Like the sugar mill image, this photograph is empty of the human figure. Rather than operating to render the sugar industry in a historical narrative, however, as the emptiness of Adams's landscapes in the opening of the book did for the Native Hawaiian community, the vacancy of the plantation images suggests that the fields and all their accompanying equipment function on their own, or at least with little human labor. The sun, the rain, and advanced technology provide the necessary elements to grow, harvest, and refine sugar for mainland dinner tables. The ills once associated with Hawai'i's agriculture industry, which had so forcefully influenced the shape and character of the islands in the early nineteenth century, have disappeared in Adams's images.

Indeed, while the environmental impact of the sugar plantations may not have risen fully to public consciousness by the mid-century, the Big Five, a coalition of firms associated with Hawai'i's sugar and pineapple plantations consisting of Castle & Cooke, Ltd., Alexander & Baldwin, Ltd., C. Brewer and Company, Ltd., Theo H. Davies &

Company, Ltd., and American Factors, Ltd., had received sustained mainland criticism in the early decades of the century for their “oppressive” and “anti-democratic” labor system.¹⁰¹ In the years between the U.S. annexation of Hawai’i and the events of WWII, the islands’ social, political, and economic spheres were largely under the influence of the Big Five. In his analysis of negative perceptions towards the sugar industry’s leaders during these territorial years, historian John S. Whitehead argues that issues with the Big Five had as much to do with racial prejudice against the Asian labor force as they did with openly stated complaints regarding the character of the islands’ businesses. Whitehead notes that “pre-war criticism was based on negative mainland assumptions about Hawai’i’s Asian population. The Big Five were demonized for keeping out white settlers or for maintaining an alien work force that jeopardized the military security of the United States.”¹⁰² This oligarchy of Caucasian businessmen lost some power in the years during and after WWII. Initially, the declaration of martial law in response to the attacks at Pearl Harbor gave the U.S. military complete control over the islands, challenging Big Five dominance and “curtailing local self-government and individual civil rights until October 1944.”¹⁰³ After the war’s end in 1945, the military maintained a large presence in Hawai’i, and the Big Five saw an increase in Union activity spurred by new U.S. legislation and the “coming-of-age” of Asian and Asian-American workers.¹⁰⁴ As a result, the Big Five’s influence was on the wane in mid-century Hawai’i.

101. For more on the Big Five’s influence in the Islands and the mainland criticism they received, see John S. Whitehead, “Western Progressives, Old South Planters, or Colonial Oppressors: The Enigma of Hawai’i’s ‘Big Five,’ 1898-1940,” *The Western Historical Quarterly*, 30, no. 3 (Autumn, 1999): 295-326.

102. *Ibid.*, 320.

103. *Ibid.*, 317.

104. *Ibid.*, 319. See also Bell, 84-91.

While Whitehead observes that U.S. constraints on immigration and limitations on the Territory's participation in national politics contributed to the modes of operation practiced by the Big Five, many statehood advocates, including the bank's Head of Public Relations, Edward Joesting, nonetheless viewed their loss of power after the war as a marker of Hawai'i's forward march towards democracy.¹⁰⁵ Despite changing dynamics of power within the archipelago, sugar and pineapple remained the largest contributors to Hawai'i's economy and both agricultural industries appear in *The Islands of Hawaii* with sustained attention. Yet, in contrast to earlier perceptions of an "oppressive" industry, the images in the photobook offer viewers the sense of a reformed system. Intermixing images of sugar cane and pineapple canning with scenes of the islands' community and cultural life, in the hands of Adams and the bank these industries are cast as rooted, yet neutral participants in Hawai'i's everyday existence.

Like Joesting, Adams, too, would have been familiar with the Big Five's dominating power prior to the war. The Big Five and Hawaiian sugar had a strong presence in San Francisco where Adams grew up and continued to work and live later in life.¹⁰⁶ Moreover, the photographer had tangentially experienced the Big Five's aggressive practices in the early twentieth century when the Hawaiian Sugar Trust thwarted a potentially threatening business venture undertaken by the photographer's father, Charles Adams, when his son was still an adolescent. Adams would recall in a 1972 interview how the undue misfortune, supported by Adams Sr.'s business partner

105. Whitehead draws this connection between Joesting and what he describes as the "democratic saga" of Hawaiian historiography after WWII, 320. See also Edward Joesting, *Hawaii: An Uncommon History* (New York: Norton, 1972).

106. Whitehead, 299-302.

and brother-in-law Ansel Easton—Adams’s namesake, no less—divided the family.¹⁰⁷ The financial loss resulting from the Trust’s sabotaging influence lingered throughout Adams Sr.’s lifetime.¹⁰⁸ Speaking in the 1970s, Adams noted how the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, established in 1929, offers greater protection for investors and stockholders than existed at the time of his father’s investment.¹⁰⁹ In a way, this comment regarding the S.E.C. suggests a desire on the part of Adams to maintain trust in a capitalist system that previously seemed unjust and overly aggressive for the everyday man. From the appearance of images featuring the sugar plantations in *The Islands of Hawaii*, a similar effort to maintain a belief in the benefits of the powerful industry, and capitalism more generally, on the part of Adams and the bank is evident. In the absence of authoritative plantation owners or immigrant workers in the images of the sugar plantation, the idea of benign capitalist production and its synonymous relationship to American democracy prevails.

Sugar, along with pineapple, tourists, and the freighters, which transport these commodities and consumers between the Hawaiian and Californian coasts, would have been familiar depictions of the islands’ industrial activities by the time of *The Islands of Hawaii*’s publication. Such industries were known among mainland citizens through heavy advertising efforts led in the U.S. by the Big Five firms, Dole Pineapple Co., Matson Navigational Co., and the Hawaii Tourist Bureau.¹¹⁰ The presence of these

107. Ansel Adams, “Conversations with Ansel Adams,” interviews by Ruth Teiser and Catherine Harroun 1972, 1974, 1975, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1978, 10.

108. Spaulding, 12-3.

109. Adams, “Conversations,” 10.

110. For more on the visualization of Hawai’i through advertising, see DeSoto Brown, “Beautiful, Romantic Hawaii: How the Fantasy Image Came to Be” *The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts* 20 (1994): 252-271.

industries in the photobook stood to remind readers of the archipelago's significant link with the U.S. through luxury goods and the promise of leisure, each becoming more accessible to mainland audiences at the time. Notably, the process of canning developed in the early twentieth century brought the pineapple's symbolic associations with hospitality and wealth from Colonial America into the present and into the hands of the growing middle-class. Through these well-known industries, Hawai'i maintained a romantic appeal for consumers. Where *The Islands of Hawaii* functions most effectively, however, is in presenting documentary-like images that represent a broader perspective on island production and economic livelihood. In doing so, Adams and the bank ground Hawai'i in a more tangible reality and demonstrate the success of American capitalism for the archipelago and its people.

Following page spreads devoted to sugar and pineapple, images appear representing flowers, clothing, fertilizer, and furniture as additional goods that diversify the islands economic base. Such production fosters imports and exports around the world while also serving local needs, according to Joesting's text in *The Islands of Hawaii*. Unlike the faceless industry of sugar, Adams features these smaller businesses through images that put a clear focus on business owners, workers, and artisans in the midst of their daily labor. Both men and women appear in this page spread devoted to Hawaiian businesses, although the contemporary social norms and standards of appropriate gender roles expressed elsewhere in the book remain sharply delineated here and the activity of capitalist labor is shown as a primarily masculine endeavor. Take, for instance, the neighboring images of Tsugiko Suzuki of the Mauna Loa Orchid Company and Haruo Yamamoto of Kamehameha Garment Company [fig. 2.9]. Both plates highlight the

activity of a single worker within a larger company, positioned at a table before them and engaged in what is surely a common task in their respective careers. Both individuals focus their attention solely towards their work, neither making eye contact with the camera. Yet, even while Suzuki and Yamamoto appear to the reader similarly as dedicated employees, the manner in which the two are pictured suggests difference.

Whereas Suzuki stands elegantly dressed within a compact space, gazing at the orchids before her on the sleek, reflective table that pins her to the wall, Adams's composition and use of space in the image of Yamamoto creates a more active impression of the job at hand. The figure sports a casual short-sleeved tee that reveals his solid build as he engages in the destructive act of cutting; his dress and demeanor display his masculinity. Adams has moreover heightened this manly character by positioning Yamamoto independently within an open space shared only with the elongated tables that push back forcefully through the picture plane. While additional activity can be read in the background behind Yamamoto, his female co-workers are here barely discernible, hunched-back at their sewing machines. These varied compositions suggest different value judgments towards the two workers. While Suzuki appears in equal proportion to the background foliage and elements that surround her, Yamamoto looms large within the space Adams's has created for him. The tables of Suzuki and Yamamoto both display their work and leave it to the reader to draw inferences on the capabilities and endurance of the two workers.

Going even further to balance the impersonal agricultural industries of sugar and pineapple, the page spread of small businesses from *The Islands of Hawaii* features two images that directly identify the success of local entrepreneurs. With the decline of the

independent industrialist and the postwar rise of the corporate businessman, fulfilling the long-standing ideal of American masculinity—the notion of the self-made man possessing individual achievement and success—grew more complex in the fifties. As evidenced in the earlier image of Mr. Thiim at home (although not far from the world of business), social norms of the period expected men to remain devoted breadwinners without losing themselves to the pressures of conformity and corporate subordination.¹¹¹ Adams's images of the family-owned furniture manufacture C.S. Wo and Sons and the “pioneer” Myron Wold, who is credited with developing new uses for the islands' lumber resources, offer reassurance that the self-made man still exists and is active in Hawai'i. The two men of C. S. Wo and Sons in the image on the left, presumably representing the younger half of the company, stand separated by a spiraling structure of stacked wooden table frames [fig. 2.10]. The setting gives the impression of a warehouse and the two figures stand surrounded by the abundance of their work—Adams leaves it to the viewer to image how the structures of furniture-in-progress continue outside the picture's frame. Although the composition threatens to enclose the figures with the modernist structures that crowd the foreground and reach above their heads, the reserved strength and stability of the men's bodies as they steadily balance and lower an additional frame to one of the stacks demonstrates their control of the objects. Instead of seeming overwhelmed by the product, the men's bodies suggest the quality of the furniture they produce. In Adams's photographs of Hawaiian industrial life, faceless corporate capitalism is balanced with the reassurance that the self-made man, or men, can still work the system to their advantage. Placing such images of industry in relation to Adams's representation of island families

111. Michael S. Kimmel, *Manhood In America: A Cultural History* (New York: The Free Press, 1996), 236.

like the Thiims, offers a comprehensive view of Hawaiian society in line with the prevailing image of American society at the time.

The Islands' Strategic Locale

Images of the military dominate the concluding pages of *The Islands of Hawaii*.

Considering the recent wars, Adams and the bank understandably seized the opportunity to pay tribute to the American armed forces. Additionally, given tensions with the Soviet Union, images of missiles, tanks, and marine helicopters, not to mention radar planes and low-frequency transmitters, would have been a not-so-subtle reminder of Hawai'i's strategic and desirable position within the Pacific. While the surface of the U.S. nation appeared calm, the threat of nuclear destruction was omnipresent. Adams's images of military activity in the photobook alternate between views looking upwards, towards scenes of action and looming equipment, and images that position the viewer above the scene, looking down on crowds of people and military personnel. The former type of image signifies the strength of the military and a reverence for its authority; it situates the viewer as a beneficiary of military presence and defense. The latter type of image, in offering a bird's-eye perspective, positions the viewer in a role of power and responsibility all their own, suggesting a complex dynamic involved in the issue of statehood.

In one such example, military and civilian lives mingle through the presence of the family unit to show the interrelation of these two institutions. Men in various military uniform and civilian women carrying luggage and toting young children exit the runway of an airfield [fig. 2.11]. The camera looks down on the cluster of individuals who follow

behind a man, possibly a higher-ranking officer given the uniqueness of his uniform, leading them through a simple chain-linked gate. A female military employee at lower left provides a supportive role, directing the crowd to continue out of the image's frame. In the background, the viewer can make out two idle planes. One such air transport points its nose to the crowd, surrounded by movable staircases. Conspicuously marked with the words "U.S. Air Force" along its side, it is clear to viewers that just moments before the release of the shutter this plane had safely delivered the individuals visible in the foreground. The range of skin tones in this photograph from Hickman Air Force Base in Oahu continues the narrative of racial harmony from the earlier pages of the photobook. Acknowledgment that "we're all on the same side," so to speak, would have resonated significantly with readers for whom the events of Pearl Harbor were still fresh in memory. In the casual procession of men, women, and children off the runway of Hickman Field, the role of the military as the protector of the family, a metonym for the nation, offers a powerful statement on statehood.¹¹² The image demonstrates what might be at risk for the U.S. if Hawai'i indeed should be lost. Coupled with the aerial perspective that lends the viewer a watchful eye, this idea places responsibility on readers of *The Islands of Hawaii* to support the push for Hawai'i's immediate admission as a measure of security.

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In *The Islands of Hawaii*, representations of family, islands industry, and military activities construct a narrative of modern Hawai'i as an American community, fully

112. For more on the family within a military context and the Cold War, see Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988) and Donna Alvah, "American Military Families Overseas and Early Cold War Foreign Relations" *Minerva: Quarterly Report on Women and the Military* (Spring 2000). Accessed February 10, 2012 via http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0EXI/is_1_18/ai_67831280/

deserving of admission into the Union and into the full rights of U.S. citizenship. Placing such images from the book within the context of the statehood debates and the social and political atmosphere of the Cold War highlights the role of gender and the careful management of race within the construction of Hawai'i's national belonging, and American nationalism more generally. Adams and Joesting link the residents of Hawai'i with the citizens on the mainland through relevant national myths, and negotiate race within the familial image through the notion of Adams's "happy mixtures." Drawing on normative gender roles and responsibilities as played out in the nuclear family or the work place gives evidence of Hawaiian society's full assimilation to American ideals and values, and offers a means to temper issues of race fueling statehood opposition. Above all, in *The Islands of Hawaii*, the family becomes the site through which mainland readers are made aware that admission of Hawai'i as a U.S. state was not only the next logical step for the Territory, but was also integral to the future interests of the nation.

Conclusion

Upon publication of *The Islands of Hawaii* in 1958, Adams encouraged Joesting and the bank to send out copies to mainland libraries, congressmen, and the U.S. president. In the summer of 1959, a year after publication of the Bishop National Bank's centennial photobook, President Eisenhower signed a declaration admitting Hawai'i into the Union as the fiftieth state. To credit the photobook or its producers with changing the tides of opinion in favor of statehood is an overestimation. Yet its significance as a record of its time, offering perspective on changing notions of American nationhood, citizenship, and identity is evident. For more than a decade, residents of Hawai'i carried out a social and political campaign seeking national acceptance. Proposals for statehood faced continued resistance in Congress throughout the 1950s, but the semi-colonial status of the territory weighed negatively on the U.S. image abroad as Cold War tensions persisted and anti-colonial sentiments continued to grow. In this atmosphere, political proponents of statehood increasingly viewed Hawai'i as a means by which to enhance the nation's democratic reputation. Statehood could signal U.S. support of decolonization efforts as well as neutralize recent events highlighting racial inequalities in the American South by embracing the islands' ethnically diverse citizenship. The nation's ideals were under question and Hawaiian statehood offered the opportunity for resolution, albeit one removed from the mainland. For a majority of islands' residents, however, statehood was more than a mere measure of goodwill in U.S. foreign policy: it held significant implications for securing a political voice in local and national activities, and for

asserting themselves as American citizens.¹¹³ In this manner, despite distance and attempts to disassociate the islands from the struggle for equality on the mainland, Hawai'i would anticipate and play a part in the civil rights movement still to come.

The Islands of Hawaii operates in support of statehood but, like the diverse desires and circumstances that led to the islands' eventual acceptance into the Union, images by Adams that fill the book's pages perform variously as U.S. propaganda, as critique of mainland race relations, and as hopeful imaginings for the future of American nationalism. Such characterization exists in discordance with the way popular and art historical discourses have traditionally approached Adams's work. Whether illustrated calendars, museum exhibitions, or scholarly research, discussion of Adams tends to remain centered on the "majesty" of his landscapes and his legacy as "master" of the medium, subjects consistently reworked with various aggrandizing descriptors. Indeed, the landscape is a significant element of Adams's artistic vision and inspiration, but the landscape and "photography as art" are also the subjects through which his political and ideological voice takes shape, at once lobbying on behalf of the National Parks and the expressive qualities of the medium. Adams's projects from the 1940s and 50s including the Manzanar photos, an unfinished work on African-American education, and *The Islands of Hawaii* begin to reveal how this voice found further cause in the social issues of the time and was expressed in the photographer's portraiture and images of the human

113. This contrasts with the sentiments expressed in 1993 on the 100th anniversary of the Hawaiian Kingdom's overthrow when individuals taking part in a demonstration on the front lawn of Iolani Palace chanted, "We Are Not American." Hawaiian Statehood played a part in instigating a movement of resistance among Native Hawaiians that would gain momentum in the late 1960s and 1970s, and remains active today. For an introduction to the sovereignty movement see, Haunani-Kay Trask, *From a Native Daughter Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawaii* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999).

environment. What is lost in restricting the discussion of Adams to the grandeur of his landscapes is the greater complexity and sophistication of an artist consciously responding to the changing dynamics of the nation in which he lived and worked. In considering an area of Adams's *oeuvre* that has received little attention thus far, this thesis has attempted to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the artist previously initiated by such scholars as Jonathan Spaulding, Deborah Bright, and Kelly Dennis, whose distinct thinking has informed the present text. Ansel Adams's participation in *The Islands of Hawaii* demonstrates how the photographer crossed a variety of spheres throughout his career—political, commercial, and social, as well as artistic. His photographs illustrate the complexity involved in negotiating a tradition of racial exclusion to align more fully with the nation's civic ideals.

In the years that followed statehood, the Bishop National Bank continued to produce publications under the stewardship of Edward Joesting in service of the company, their members, and the islands community. Joesting, too, worked independent of the bank on a number of photo books that focused in on different aspects of the islands' story. In the mid-1960s, he and Adams collaborated again on a second book of Hawaiian scenes, mostly landscapes, called *An Introduction to Hawaii*, which included both reproductions from the bank's project and previously unpublished images. More research might be done to place *The Islands of Hawaii* within this body of work on the state, as well as those of Adams's projects that suggest a social turn in the photographer's concerns and a shift in his philosophy on the potential of the medium. Additionally, further research on the reception of the photobook both on the mainland and in the islands would offer a better understanding of its reach and impact. As they stand,

however, the preceding chapters begin to elucidate the rich and telling story of a photographer, a bank, and an island as together they stake a claim for a star on the American flag. The nation's fiftieth state, both through intention and circumstance, was, indeed, American made.

ILLUSTRATIONS



Figure 1. Ansel Adams, *Hawaiian and American flags atop Iolani Palace, Honolulu, Oahu*. From *The Islands of Hawaii*, 1958.



Figure 1.1. Ansel Adams, *Mount Rainer, Sunrise*. From *My Camera in the National Parks*, 1948.



Figure 1.2. Ansel Adams, *Cliffs and surf, Hanakapiai, Kauai*. From *The Islands of Hawaii*, 1958.



Figure 1.3. Ansel Adams, *Steam vents in Kilauea Crater area, Hawaii National Park, Hawaii*. From *The Islands of Hawaii*, 1958.



Figure 1.4. Ansel Adams, *Lava flow with Mauna Loa in the background, Hawaii*. From *The Islands of Hawaii*, 1958.



Figure 1.5. David Howard Hitchcock, *Halemaumau, Lake of Fire*, Oil painting, 1888.



Figure 1.6. Ansel Adams, *Fish pond at down near Kaunakaki, Molokai*. From *The Islands of Hawaii*, 1958.

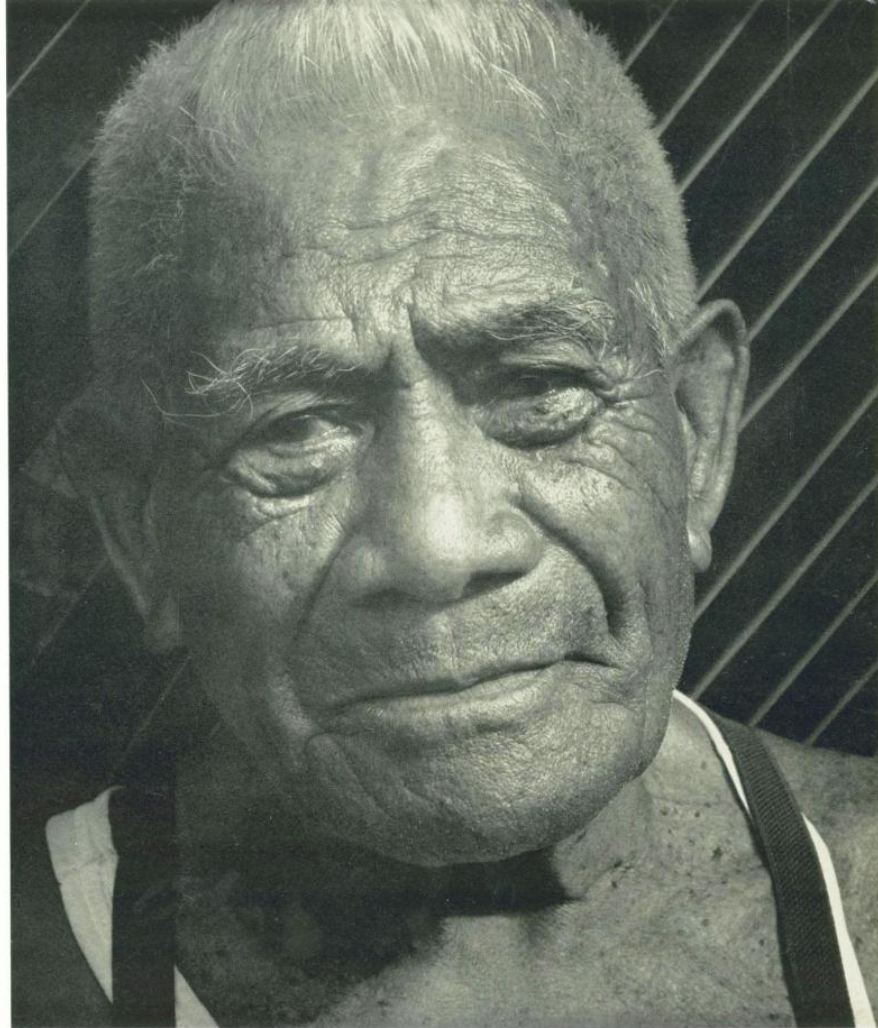


Figure 1.7. Ansel Adams, *Naluahine Kaopua, Kona coast, Hawaii*. From *The Islands of Hawaii*, 1958.



Figure 1.8. Ansel Adams, *Waioli Mission*. From *The Islands of Hawaii*, 1958.

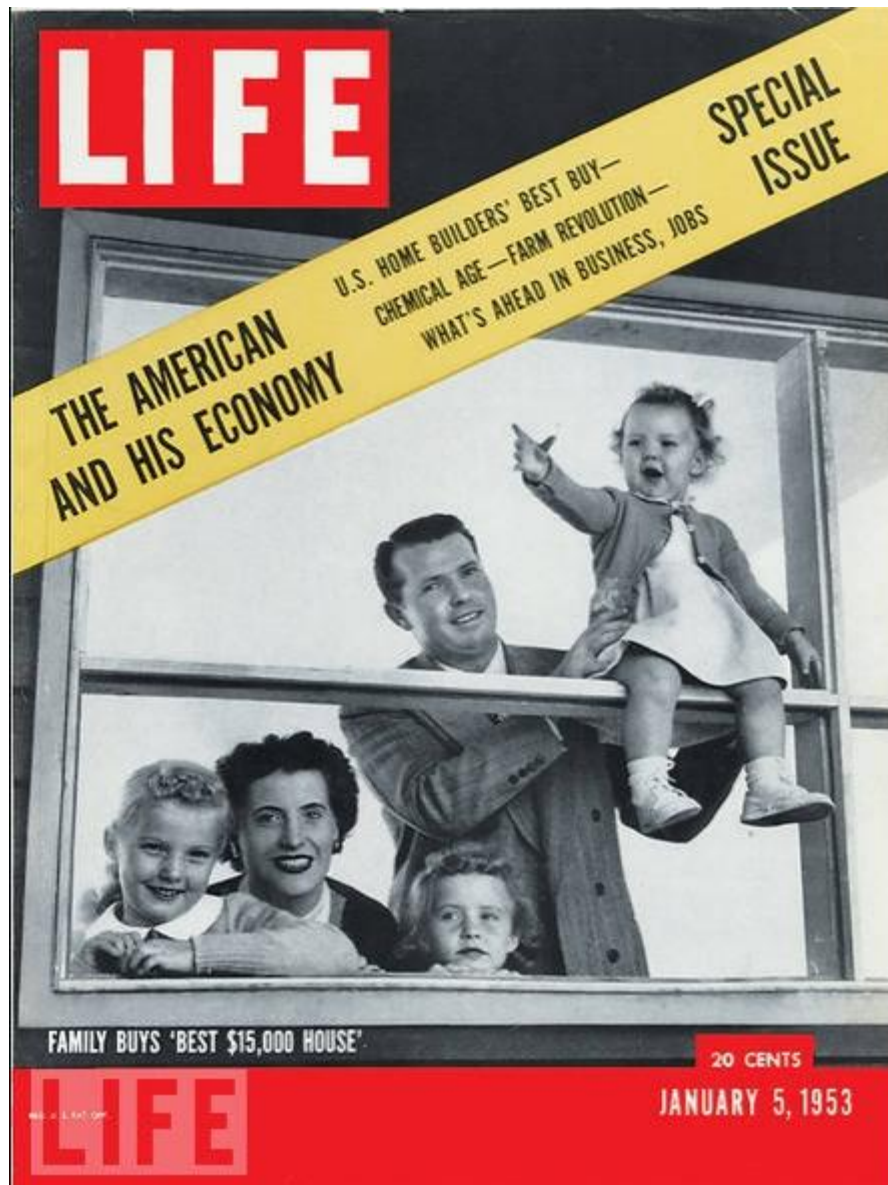


Figure 2.1. Nina Leen. Cover of *Life* Magazine, January 5, 1953.



Figure 2.2. Ansel Adams, *The Larry Thiim family of Danish-French-Hawaiian-Chinese descent*. From *The Islands of Hawaii*, 1958.



Figure 2.3. Ansel Adams, Page spread from *The Islands of Hawaii*, 1958.



Figure 2.4. Francis Miller, (Elizabeth Eckford as she is turned away from entering Central High School. Little Rock, Arkansas), September 1957.

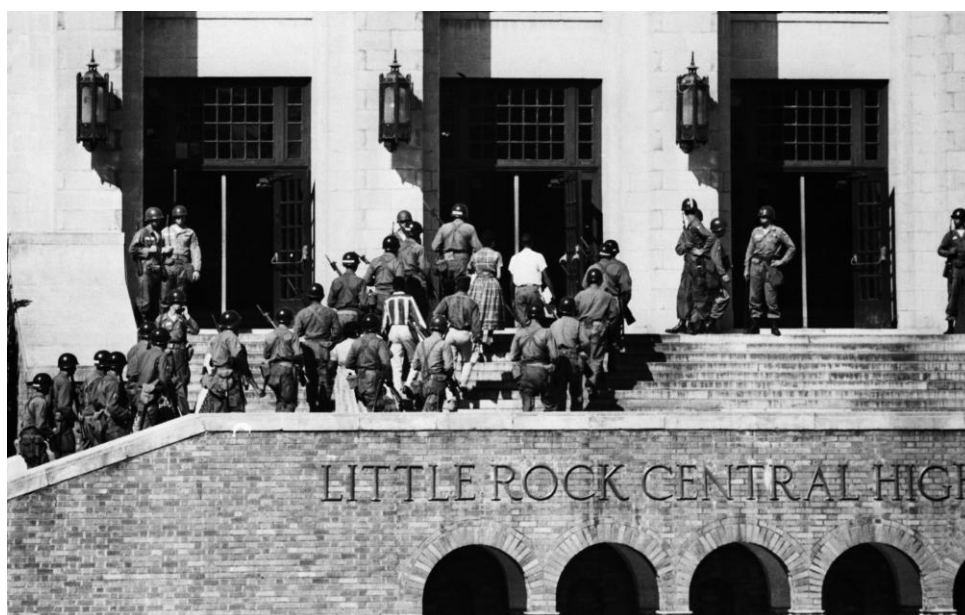


Figure 2.5. Photographer Unknown, (Soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division escort the Little Rock Nine students into Central High School. Little Rock, Arkansas), 1957.



Figure 2.6. Ansel Adams, *McKinley High School, Honolulu, Oahu*. From *The Islands of Hawaii*, 1958.



Figure 2.7. Ansel Adams, *Sugar mill near Waialua, Oahu*. From *The Islands of Hawaii*, 1958.



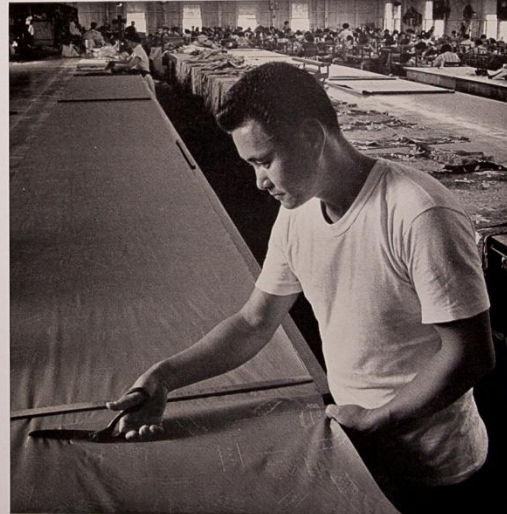
Figure 2.8. Ansel Adams, *Photochemical sunlight and actinometer station near Hilo, Hawaii*. From *The Islands of Hawaii*, 1958.

Flowers are a part of the Island way of life. A lei of blossoms is the traditional way to welcome visitors. Anthuriums, ti leaves, Bird of Paradise, ginger and orchids are shipped each day by air to cities across the United States. There are always flowers, because Hawaii's climate is so uniform that many plants bloom naturally the year around.



82 Tsugiko Suzuki of Mauna Loa Orchid Company, Hilo, Hawaii

Hawaii's garment industry got its start when an enterprising seamstress discovered that Japanese prints made attractive dresses, swim suits and shirts. With World War II, cloth imports stopped, but Hawaiian prints proved even more popular. Now Hawaiian casual clothes are made by over thirty different manufacturers. Clothes are sold around the world and the industry employs many skilled people, like Haruo Yamamoto, who is a cutter for one large company.



83 Kamehameha Garment Company, Hilo, Hawaii

Figure 2.9. Ansel Adams, Page detail from *The Islands of Hawaii* featuring *Tsugiko Suzuki of Mauna Loa Orchid Company, Hilo, Hawaii* and *Kamehameha Garment Company, Hilo, Hawaii*, 1958.



Figure 2.10. Ansel Adams, *Stacking tables*, C.S. Wo and Sons, Honolulu, Oahu. From *The Islands of Hawaii*, 1958.



Figure 2.11. Ansel Adams, *Military Air Transport passengers deplaning, Hickman Field, Oahu*. From *The Islands of Hawaii*, 1958.

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